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AN

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

OF

SHORT-HAND,

ILLUSTRATED WITH NUMEROUS EXAMPLES

of the comparative excellence and defects of the

Different Systems,

Accompanied with a faithful exposition of the advantages arising from a thorough knowledge of the Art;

AND

FOURTEEN PLATES,

Exhibiting the Various Alphabets.

AN

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE

RISE AND PROGRESS

OF

SHORT HAND,

EXTRACTED FROM

LECTURES

Delivered at different periods by the Author;

COMPREHENDING

An Impartial and Critical Examination of the various Systems down to the present Time.

ILLUSTRATED WITH NUMEROUS EXAMPLES

Of their Comparative Excellence and Defects;

ALSO,

THE TRUE DATE AND TITLE OF EACH SYSTEM,

ACCOMPANIED WITH ITS

RESPECTIVE ALPHABET.

2 Sflr.

BY JAMES HENRY LEWIS,

Of EBLEY, *near Stroud, Gloucestershire;*

Inventor and Original Propagator of the New Method of Teaching Writing;
Professor and Teacher of Short Hand;
Author of a Treatise on that Art, on an Improved Plan;
And Short-Hand Writer in the Courts of Law.

M. G. H. C. V.

London

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And Published by Sherwood, Neeley, and Jones, Paternoster Row.

PRICE ONE GUINEA.

1816.

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TO

LORD BYRON.

MY LORD,

IN presuming to address you as the Patron of a Work, which is meant to contribute to the accomplishment and the instruction of mankind, I am not only influenced by every feeling of private gratitude, but by the deep respect which is due to extensive knowledge, united with the highest powers of the mind, and the most amiable suavity of manners. It is a duty to the public, and to myself, to bear testimony to the warmth of your friendship, to the discernment and experience which you happily possess in

the Art of SHORT-HAND, and to the value of those recommendations through which my humble Treatise was at first so favourably received.—Nor is it without peculiar pleasure that I am thus enabled to have my Stenographic labours sanctioned by the name of a Gentleman whose virtues are as exemplary as his talents are conspicuous.

I have the honour to be,

with the greatest respect,

MY LORD,

Your much obliged and

devoted Servant,

J. H. LEWIS.

Friday, 27th April,

J.H.F.L. 1810. 5 bf 11, P.M.

INTRODUCTION.

IF there be any characteristic features more striking than the rest, by which the commencement of the nineteenth century may be distinguished from preceding ages, it is in the diffusion of useful knowledge, and the magnificent improvements in education. In presenting, therefore, to the world an History and Analysis of Short-Hand, I am only acting in unison with that spirit of rational curiosity, and that regard to the instruction of all classes of society, which now so generally prevails. During many generations, intricacy and

mystery had their votaries rather than simplicity; but in the present day, every art and science is studiously familiarized to the meanest understanding: a greater facility in learning augments the number of attainments to be acquired; and auxiliary branches of research, which in former times were partially understood, or totally neglected, are now universally cultivated in every rank of society.

If the following pages contribute in the slightest degree to elucidate the principles and History of Short-hand, to extend its practice and enhance its utility, I shall conceive myself so far fortunate; and should my humble efforts be favourably received by the public, it will add a new stimulus to my future exertions.

TESTIMONIALS

in FAVOR of

Short-Hand in General.

Besides the encomiums which every author of this art pays it, whose verdict may in some measure be deemed partial, the opinions of some of the wisest and most learned men are amply sufficient to recommend it.

"Dion Cassius ascribed to Mæcenas *a very estimable invention* (among others) which is the use of characters by the Ancients called Notæ, by the help of which they wrote as fast as a man could speak, so that the discourses or harangues of orators might be faithfully collected as they pronounced them. Tiro, Cicero's free-man, is generally thought to be the inventor of this *useful and ingenious art*: perhaps Mæcenas or some of his free-men might perfect what Tiro first thought of."

Crevier's Life of Octavius Augustus.

"CICERO the Consul dispersed about the senate-house several expert writers, whom he had taught to make certain figures, which did in little and short strokes express a great many words; till that time they had not used those they call Short-hand writings; who then first, as it is said, laid the foundation of that art."

Plutarch's Life of Cato the younger.

"THE art of Short-hand is, in its kind, an ingenious device, and of very considerable usefulness, applicable to any language, much wondered at by travellers that have seen the experience of it in England, and yet, though it be above threescore years since it was first invented, it is not to this day (for aught I can learn) brought into common practice in any other nation."

Bishop Wilkins' Essay towards a Real Character.

"How *useful* the art of Short-hand may prove, may be guessed, whereby the memory of many worthy Divines is perpetuated to posterity in their works, by this art *taken and published,* which else had perished with the

breath that uttered them. And whereby many *Gentlemen and Merchants and others,* in foreign parts, have with freedom used *Bibles and Testaments written in this art,* without the fear of bloody inquisitors. And should the revolution of times bring forth such as the MARIAN days (which God avert) when one small epistle of the New Testament was at the rate of *Five Pounds,* and one Chapter sold for *a Load of Hay,* how precious then, Notes of wholesome Divinity (taken in this art, now in this harvest of the Gospel) would be, both those that should *have,* and those should *want them,* would know (though in a different manner) they would prove like the *Jews' Manna* on the Sabbath, when there was none to be gathered abroad."

The Rev. Mr. Shelton on the Utility of Short-hand.

MR. LOCKE, in his admirable *Essay on Education,* expressly mentions Short-hand as "*a useful and convenient accomplishment,*" although it was then in its rudest state, and half its advantages almost unknown.——

Mr. Molyneux, likewise, in a letter to the aforesaid gentleman, bearing date, Dublin, August 12th, 1693, speaks of it thus:——"I will have my Son taught Short-hand; I do not mean (says he) in that perfection to copy a speech from the mouth of a ready speaker, but to be able to write it readily for his own private business. Believe me, Sir, it is as useful a knack as any man of business or scholar can be master of. I have found the want of it myself, and seen the advantage of it in others frequently."

"Short-hand, on account of its great and general utility, merits a much higher rank among the arts and sciences than is commonly allotted to it. Its usefulness is not confined to any particular science or profession, but universal; and therefore by no means unworthy the attention and study of men of genius and erudition."

Dr. Samuel Johnson.

"I would recommend a knowledge of Short-hand to our *English youth of both sexes*, as a

very innocent, agreeable. and advantageous amusement; but more especially to such young gentlemen as are intended to employ their future studies in either of the three learned professions, viz., *Law, Physic,* and *Divinity*; wherein the small trouble they may take to acquire it, will be abundantly compensated by the pleasure and profit that will naturally and necessarily arise from it."

The Rev. Mr. Angell's Observations on Stenography.

"As it is usual to take notes, the attainment of Short-hand will give such a facility to your labours, as to enable you to follow the *most rapid speakers,* with certainty and precision."

Letter from the late Mr. Dunning to a Student in the Temple. See Public Advertiser, September 20th, 1780.

"We are happy to find that Short-hand is now taught at many respectable schools and seminaries for the education of youth. It is a science exceedingly useful; and the advantages arising from a complete knowledge of it, are too evident to be pointed out."

Gentleman's Magazine for August, 1798.

RECOMMENDATIONS

in FAVOR of

The Ready Writer,

OR

Ne-Plus-Ultra of Short-Hand.

Having stated the foregoing encomiums on the art of Short-hand, I shall now lay before the reader a few of the numerous testimonies which have been given in favor of "*The Ready Writer.*" These will be sufficient to shew in what high estimation this system is held by a discerning public.

"The utility of the Stenographic art is indubitable. We are ever ready to bestow our commendations on any book that teaches a more expeditious method of embodying *viva voce* and extemporaneous speech." —

"A careful examination of Mr. Lewis's book enables us to say, that it does not yield to any we have hitherto met with on the same subject, in perspicuity and adaptation to general use. His preface is actually a very animated and eloquent description of the advantages of this most useful art. And to the correctness of his remarks on the utility of Short-hand, we yield our unqualified assent."

Critical Review for February, 1816.

"The title so fully describes the nature of this work, that it is unnecessary to enter on its particular merits. A Preface of some length laments that the art was not known to the ancients; and descants very ably on its utility in the present improved state of Stenography. The poem prefixed to the treatise, 'on the excellence and utility of Short-hand,' we recommend to Mr. Lewis to withdraw from future editions. These doggerel lines, however, detract not from the *real merit* of 'The Ready Writer.'"

Gentleman's Magazine for February, 1816.

"Expedition in writing, and facility in reading, we have always understood to be the two desiderata in Short-hand writing.—Mr. Lewis's remarks (see '*The Ready Writer*') are plain and sensible, and we have no reason to doubt the efficacy of the plan which he recommends."

Antijacobin Review for March, 1816.

"Disposed as we are to doubt the validity of high pretensions in general, and in that spirit of scepticism to hesitate when new systems of instruction are offered to the public, in this era of innovation and empiricism, we took up the present volume with strong expressions of suspicion. The sense of justice, however, compels us to say, that though the book savours a little of pedantry in the style of composition, it possesses merit of no ordinary degree as an elementary guide in the art of Short and Quick Writing. Among the various substantial improvements which the author has introduced, we regard the method of expressing the *prepositions* and *terminations* as one of the most important,

and which gives to his system not only a feature of originality, but of decided superiority over others. Another peculiarity in this scheme of Stenography is the adaptation of it to scientific and commercial purposes, by Short-hand Arithmetic. The work is dedicated by permission to the PRINCE REGENT, and it is truly deserving of that high estimation."

New Monthly Magazine for April, 1816.

"A TREATISE on Short-hand has lately been published by a MR. LEWIS, which we imagine will put a period to all further contention for superiority in the Stenographic art. This matchless system is both concise and easy, and in every respect superior to any that has yet appeared. From this circumstance (together with its extensive and increasing circulation) there is reason to believe that it will entirely supercede all other publications on the same subject, and realize the title by which it is introduced to the public *"The Ne Plus Ultra of Short-hand."*

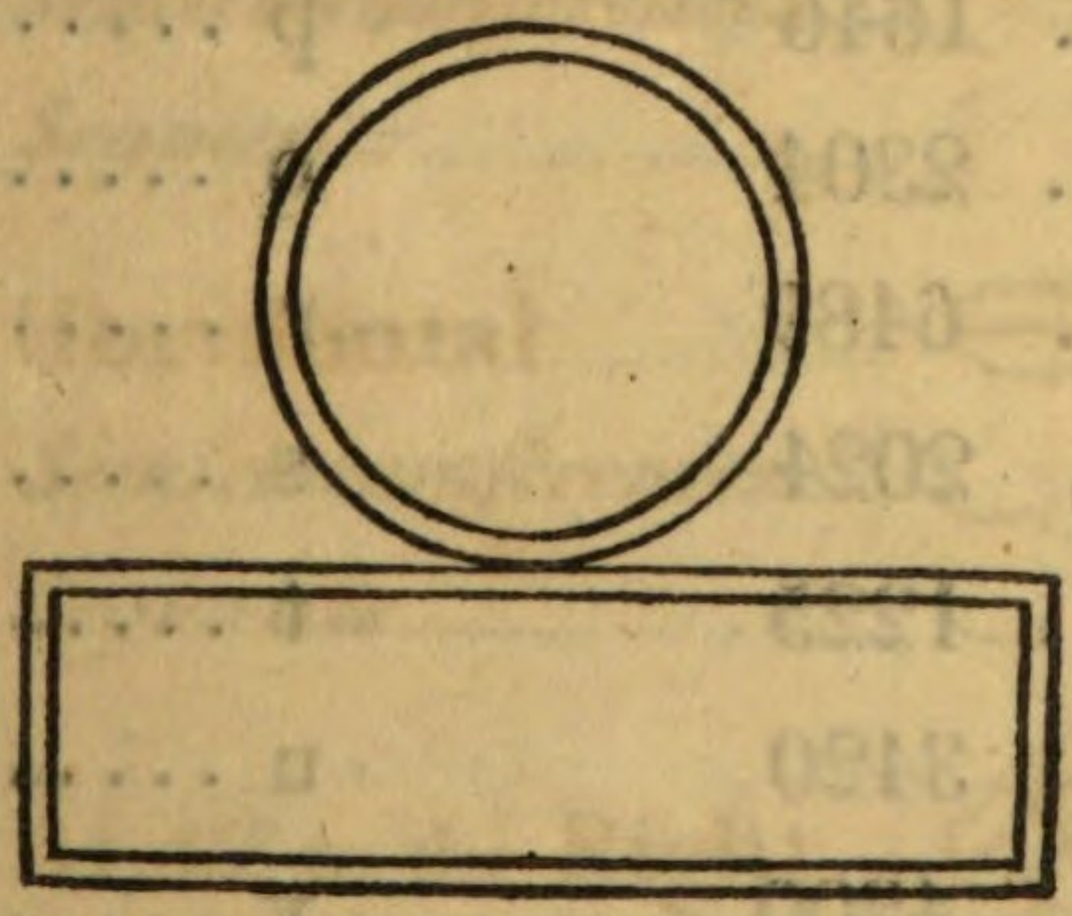
Sunday Review, 23rd June, 1816.

"In the late public exhibition and trial of the various Systems of Short-hand, it was found that a writer of Lewis's System could follow a speaker faster than writers of any other System, in the proportion of *nine* to *six*, an incontestible proof of the vast superiority of that System."

Public Ledger, 8th July, 1816.

ADVERTISEMENT.

To prevent the Public being imposed upon by any spurious edition of this book, it is published as the Act of Parliament directs; and every genuine copy of it numbered, signed, and sealed, by the Author's own hand and seal.



THE PROPORTIONS
OF
THE COMMON ALPHABET;
OR
OCCURRENCE OF THE LETTERS
IN THE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

a	4250	n	3908
b	962	o	3970
c	1646	p	989
d	2304	q	337
e	6489	r	3180
f	2024	s	4960
g	1225	t	4851
h	3420	u	2000
i	4200	v	759
j	340	w	1230
k	569	x	208
l	2320	y	1204
m	1766	z	102

The Elements, or First Principles of SHORT-HAND.

1. A Point .....

2. A Line *in four Positions* .....

3. A Circle *divided by a Perpendicular & Horizontal line* ..

Semi-Circles .....

Segments .....

4. An Ellipsis *in four Positions* .....

1st. Perpendicular .....

Semicircumferences ....

Segments .....

2nd. Horizontal .....

Semicircumferences ....

Segments .....

3rd. At 45°. to the Right ....

Semicircumferences .....

Segments .....

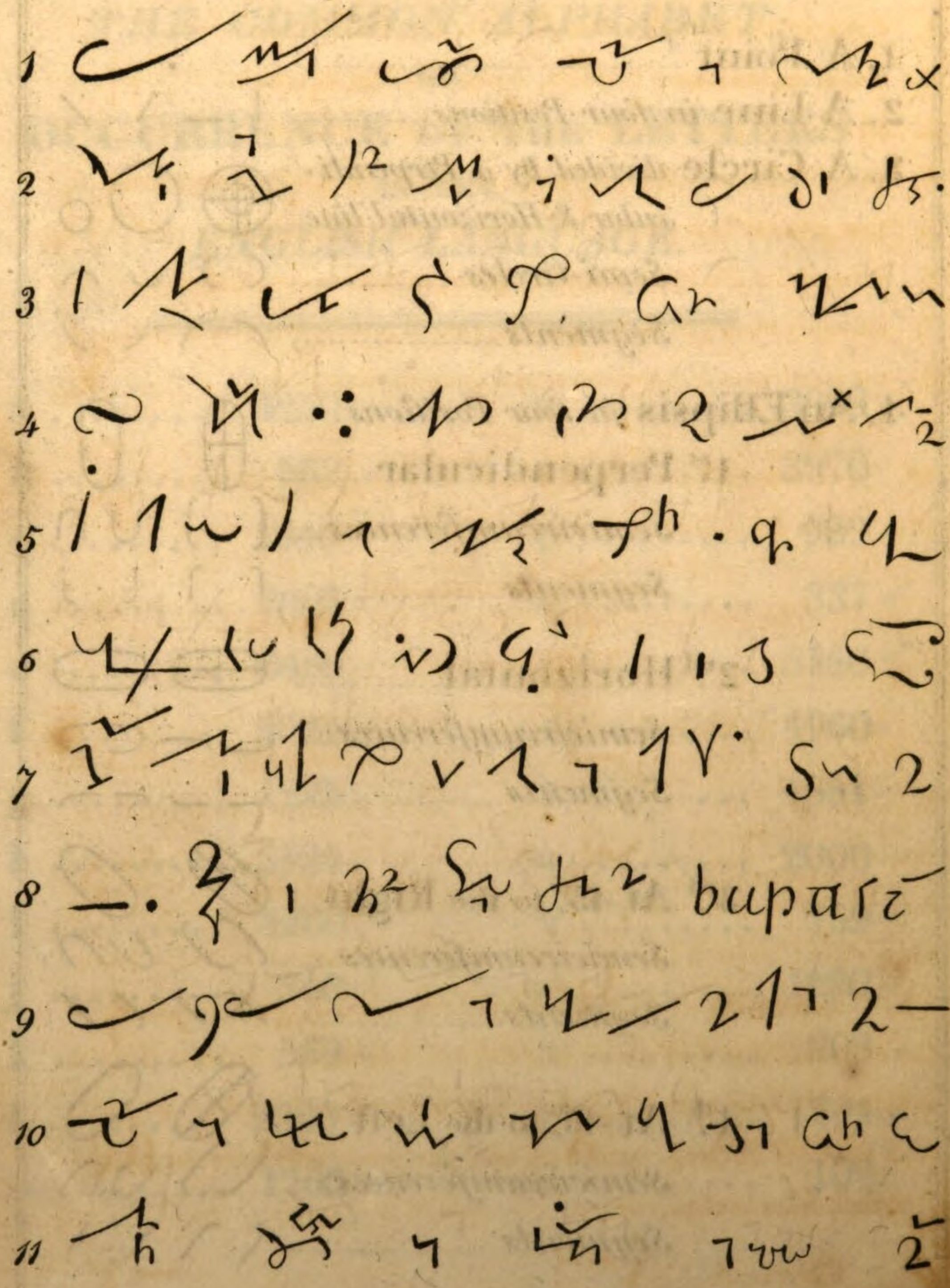
4th. At 45°. to the Left .....

Semicircumferences .....

Segments .....

Alexander sc 170. Strand.

A SPECIMEN
of the
SHORT HAND NOTES of TYRO.



Alexander fecit, Strand.

EXPLANATION OF THE OPPOSITE PAGE.

1. Cum petitionibus sacredotum justis & rationabilibus
2. divini cultus amore favemus, & eas cum Dei adjutorio
3. ad effectum perducimus, superna nos gratia muniri
4. non diffidimus. Proinde comperiat omnium fidelium nostrorum
5. tam præsentium quam & futurorum Industria, quia vir
6. venerabilis ille illius civitatis episcopus adiens serenitatem
7. culminis nostri postulavit nos ut eum & prædictam sedem quæ
8. est constructa in honorem sancti Joannis Baptistæ,
9. cum omnibus rebus & mansis quæ presenti tempore
10. juste & legalitur memorata tenet vel possidet Ecclesia, sub
11. nostra defensione & immunitatis tuitione constitueremus.

TRANSLATION.

WHEREAS, for the sake of divine Worship, we favor the just and lawful demands of the priests, and by God's assistance do bring them into effect, we doubt not being fortified by grace from above. Therefore by industry all our present and future faithful, can discover it for certain; because that venerable man the bishop of that city going unto the seclusion of our mount hath requested us to appoint him to the aforesaid mansion which is erected in honour of St. John Baptist with all its estates and buildings which the church spoken of justly and lawfully at the present time holds or possesses under our protection and defence of privileges

A SPECIMEN of

TYRO'S CHARACTERS for WORDS.

	Acceptor		*Docere*
	Actores		*Empta*
	Agri		*Et*
	Baptisari		*Genitor*
	Beatus		*Garoit*
	Bellum		*Holocausta*
	Benedictus		*Honorare*
	Curte		*Horam*
	Cura		*Honorem*
	Dies		*Karolus*

Alexander sc. 130. Strand.

LEWIS'S

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

OF

SHORT-HAND.

SECTION. I.

THE difficulty of exciting attention to the efforts of an unknown individual, in any art or science, not immediately connected with the daily amusements of life, is in proportion to its general extension, and to the number of its professors. When the first principles of a useful acquisition may be obtained at every corner of the street, and its more abstruse and more arduous problems, are the subjects of daily investigation; to the studious and the intelligent, there is equal danger of neglect to a new Candidate for favor and attention; from those who know too little or too much; from the indolence of those who rest content with the superficial attainment of a useful science; and from

the pride of individuals, who satisfied with their own advances and acquisitions, look down with contempt on those who profess to communicate instruction. Nor when a subject has once become the theme of universal enquiry, and every remark that study could collect, or ingenuity elicit, has been repeated with unvarying monotony from one writer to another; is it much less difficult to reward attention than to detain it: After the labors of so many individuals—to arrange and abridge their materials, is all that their successor can usually accomplish; and when he endeavors in the fields of science to attempt the discovery of some new and profitable course, he is doomed, too frequently, to retrace the well known paths that have been trampled by his predecessors, and to gather the gleanings of an abundant but collected harvest. Since the first introduction of the art of Short-hand among the number of the useful Sciences, it has been cultivated with a perseverance, and an ingenuity, that leaves at first sight but little prospect of comparative success to the efforts of the later Stenographers.

The attempts of successive individuals have been as various in their object, as arduous and successful in their execution. The art is taught and cultivated by a great number of professional men, and a superficial knowledge of the leading principles of Universal Stenography, may be acquired (by those who are content with hasty and inaccurate information,) from a number of cheap, and anonymous pamphlets. Yet, to the professional man, and to the adepts in Stenography, I am not without hope that the task of apology will be far from difficult. Those who best understand the art, are most aware how much is still wanting; not only to its perfection, but to its comparative improvement: They who possess the most sincere and ardent interest in its advancement, will be thankful for the slightest hint, from the humblest individual; and the well-informed part of my readers who wish to acquire, or have already made a moderate progress in its rudiments, will listen (it may be presumed) with some degree of attention, to the

remarks, and the cautions, of an individual who has devoted the greater part of his life to the cultivation of the science on which he treats; beneath whose superintendance many hundred pupils have been instructed in its principles; and whose pretensions to a knowledge of the art, have for some time been honored by the sanction of the literary public. Were these Lectures calculated, indeed, for no other purpose, than to warn the younger or less reflecting part of my readers, against the frauds on their time, and their purses, that daily appear under the form of *cheap* and *easy* introductions to Short-hand; they would not be unproductive of considerable utility. In proportion to the facility with which a rational and legitimate system may be attained and reduced to practice, the loss of time, and the disappointments attending the use of *paltry* and *unprofitable* works, is to be lamented. The usual mode of manufacturing a Short-hand book, intended *not for use* but *for sale*, is this:—The book-seller finds, from repeated enquiries for a *cheap* and *easy* in-

troduction to the art, that a system of Stenography would be a profitable speculation: he therefore applies to some one of his literary labourers, and offers him five or ten pounds for the immediate production of "*A New and Universal Grammar of the Art,*" that shall supersede all preceding efforts of a similar nature. The person to whom he applies, is, in all probability, utterly ignorant of Short-hand; but so tempting an offer is not to be neglected:—he has recourse to the established systems, and with all possible expedition, takes an Alphabet from one, a System of Terminations from another, and from a third, a Series of Joining Rules.—From the heterogeneous combination of many plans, he lays down, with some little labour, the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed, in a decent engraving; and then commits his Treatise to the world, as the *desideratum* of the Art.!

For the student himself to discover the imperfections of a book, or the ignorance of a teacher, is nearly impossible; he therefore ascribes the imperfection, prolixity, and con-

fusion, that impede his progress, and defeat his object, to the Art itself: and abandons a useful acquisition in despair, because he has been obstructed, or misled, by the knavery and impudence of pretended teachers.—It is the duty of every man, therefore, who feels a just confidence in his own professional abilities, and who wishes to be distinguished from the *empirics* who thus abuse and depreciate the art, to seize every occasion of putting his own knowledge to the test; and of enabling the public to determine on the justice of his claims. With the Individual who has the honor of presenting to the world these Lectures, the conviction of this duty is blended with an earnest and disinterested desire for the advancement of the art; and however conscious I may be of my own inability, to give the grace of novelty to a beaten subject, yet a proper, though I trust not an obtrusive confidence in my knowledge of the art, and the earnest solicitation of many professional pupils, have determined me to contribute as much as lays in my power to its general diffusion.

The advantages of Short-hand, though fully and justly appreciated by proficients in the art, are but little understood, or admitted, by the great majority of the public. Yet the employment of a Stenographic Alphabet, and the observation of its rules, not only contribute to the most useful and important purposes in the general intercourse of life; but tend, in a degree that would not at first sight be suspected, to the improvement of the intellectual faculties. They contribute to the convenience of the Merchant, and to the promotion of the best interests of Religion, of Learning, and of Eloquence:—while they tend, at the same time, to the cultivation of the noblest attributes, and to the developement of mental excellence.

The application of Short-hand to its most obvious and important purpose—that of embodying the oral eloquence of the Orator and the Divine, has a tendency above every other exertion of the faculties, to enure the mind to promptitude of apprehension, to habits of patient and vigilant attention, and to that minuteness and distinctness of perception,

which intellectual exercise can alone bestow. To catch with intuitive sagacity the whole scope and construction of a sentence, while the speaker is himself in doubt, to what sentiments he is about to give utterance; to receive the impression on the ear, with such promptitude and distinctness of perception, that the hand spontaneously obeys the impulse of the mind: to pursue without embarrasment, the most rapid flights of the most vehement orator; and to sustain a continued and vigorous attention, during his loftiest and most extended efforts; demands a combination of qualities, which no other species of intellectual discipline would be able to develope.

Of all the numerous advantages of Stenography, its regency over the memory is one of its sublimest and most valuable attributes: —It stands a subtle centinel to watch the motion of the lips, and gives form and animation to sounds, which, but for its active vigilance, had perished on the vacant air. When a Stenographer is taking minutes of any public harangue, whether Ecclesiastical,

Philosophical, Senatorial, or Judicial, he is compelled to retain in his memory the *last sentence* of the speaker, and at the same time, must strictly attend to the *subsequent ones*, in order to make a perfect representation of the discourse: — This continual exercise of the memory begets habits of intense and persevering study, trains it to a regular and systematic method of investigation, and so strengthens and mechanically inures it to retention, as to enable the practical Stenographer to *remember more of a discourse, without writing*, than any person, by the use of the *common small hand*, would be able to take a copy of in the time, with all possible abbreviations. Many professional gentlemen, with whom I am acquainted, who, previous to the exercise of this art, could with difficulty remember, on their return home, the *heads* of a discourse, are now enabled (from the practice of Stenography) to carry home the accurate expressions of the speaker, and commit them to writing. The knowledge of this art (as hath been before observed) accustoms the mind

to those constant habits of attention, that they never fail to impress upon the memory, the topics and minutest sentiments of the most rapid and voluminous discourse. It allures and draws out the powers of the mind, excites *invention*, improves the *ingenuity*, matures the *judgment*, and endows the retentive faculty with those *superior attributes* of *precision, vigilance, and perseverance*. It insensibly leads us to remember, with accuracy, even the most trivial colloquies of society; as well as to arrange, digest, connect, and embody, in the memory, the sublime conceptions, or as we may figuratively style them, the lightening expressions of our most celebrated statesmen and orators; and to expand, illuminate, and endow, with superior powers, the extensive sphere of the godlike memory

Assisted by this art, HORTENSIUS the celebrated Roman orator, and contemporary of CICERO, so improved the extensive powers of his memory, that he was enabled to repeat a whole oration in the words he had previously conceived in his mind, without

committing it to writing; and to repel, convict, and confute, the subtilest arguments of his more diligent but feebler opponents.

SENECA, the philosopher, and instructor of NERO, only by a slender knowledge of the Stenographic art, so exercised and strengthened his memory, as to be enabled to repeat *two thousand names* in any order, after *once* hearing them; and this surprising quality is ascribed by his biographers, to his application to this invaluable art.

As a great and important illustration of this most noble and inestimable acquisition to the faculties of the human mind, it may be justly observed, that whilst expedition, after the common modes of writing, is apt to spoil the beautiful forms of its characters, and cause a good hand to degenerate into an unintelligible scrawl; this art (by its compression), being a mere lineal movement, not only prevents these defects, and saves it from ruin, but its simple expression and wonderful rapidity have also the united advantage of securing to the professor every convenience which a mode of writing, at once *brief, easy, secret,* and

expeditious, is capable of promoting.

Its influence in the improvement of the *common modes of writing,* is daily experienced by the Stenographer; who finds that the facility of writing depends solely upon a swift apprehension of the subject, which attribute, this mechanical art of the memory, can alone confer. It communicates a facility in seizing at a single glance, the *forms* and *positions* of the most difficult characters; a steadiness and promptness of hand; together with the most inconceivable rapidity, And, thus, it will *invariably* be found, that the neatest writer of Short-hand is also the *best* and *swiftest* writer of the *common hands,* and *vice versa.* Because good writing depends upon a certain command of hand and imitative genius, which will equally extend to all kinds of writing. Would it not, therefore, the author presumes to ask, be a fortunate circumstance, if the rising generation would ardently pursue and make themselves masters of an art, that contains such innumerable advantages, and may emphatically be styled the basis of the memory;—an art which would make them the

proprietors of the wisdom of the Sage,—the science of the liberal Professor, and the eloquence of the Patriot,—which would enable them to commit memorandums to paper almost as instantaneously as they are conceived, and make entries, inventories, observations, or comments, in as short a time as they could be spoken.

By a correspondence in Short-hand, *ten* times the substance may be conveyed on the same paper, as by the cumbrous mechanism of *common writing*, and a still greater proportion in the dissipation of time saved.

The indispensible necessity of Short-hand, in taking the minutes of the common purposes of life, both at the Bar, the Pulpit, and the Senate, is so perfectly and universally understood, that I scarcely need mention it. The many interesting Trials, the many excellent Sermons, Orations, Lectures, &c, which have been taken down by this art, both for private edification and public usefulness, are eminent vouchers of its great utility in that respect; and, were the public duly acquainted with the advantages of this art, they would become the

advocates of its general diffusion through our seminaries, as conferring a dispatch in the acquisition of human learning, which no other branch of knowledge can convey.

Few arts are so useful as that of Shorthand, or can be compared to it for simplicity, both in the invention and execution; and when we reflect that the short space of a week's practice is sufficient (by the author's improved mode of instruction) to make the most ordinary capacity an able proficient, it would be a disgraceful dereliction in the man of letters, to the interest of knowledge, were he not to become the ardent advocate and protector of its general diffusion.

A quick and ready mode of committing either our own thoughts or those of others, to the safeguard of manuscript, is surely worth all the care we can bestow upon it! A thousand thoughts which daily strike us, may be preserved from destruction, to the probable benefit of ourselves and our posterity; and if the first ideas be crude and indigested, they will have the advantage of time to correct and improve them. They will,

moreover, possess the valuable property of secrecy, whereby the scrutiny of the critic will be effectually prevented, till mature deliberation shall have ripened and perfected them for publication.

But for this necessary and most invaluable attainment of intellectual science, the orations of our most polished and instructive orators had perished on the undulating and dissipating wave of the air; and those, who were the ravished auditors of such divine discourses, though they felt the impressions, could never have communicated them.

The Stenographic Student will therefore feel, that the pleasures and utilities of this noble art are amply sufficient to recommend it. To be enabled to carry home and make tangible the substance (at least) of Lectures on natural philosophy, anatomy, or medicine, to preserve the topics of the illustrious Patriot and Orator, the illuminations of the zealous Divine, and admonitions of the learned Counsellor and Judge, is surely an attainment that ought to excite the attention and encouragement of every well-wisher and advocate of human improvement.

To transcribe with promptitude, to arrest from dissolution, and render perpetual the fleeting thoughts of the ardent mind, are among the foremost advantages of the Stenographic art, and ought to be cultivated by every lover of human knowledge.

This art should not be considered as confined to any particnlar branch of science, or department in society; men of every rank or description in life, whether public or private, will find it of excellent service, and may be profited by the study of it. The Critic and the Philosopher; the Statesman and Politician; the Physician and Divine; the Counsellor and Lawyer; the Poet and Historian; the Merchant and Factor; the Gentleman; Tradesman; and Mechanic; the Traveller; and the Student in general; each will find its utility amply compensate for the labour of its attainment. To attempt, however, to display all the advantages arising from a thorough knowledge of the Graphic art, is a task the author conceives himself unequal to, and would indeed, be

idly laboring to illustrate what is obvious to every capacity. 'Tis to this art, thousands are indebted for half the pleasures of their existence: by it Science has been enlarged beyond the formerly supposed boundaries of human knowledge: Literature has derived the greatest assistance from it: and thereby the promotion and diffusion of knowledge in other arts and sciences have been considerably accelerated. That desired *acmé* of mental perfection, commonly distinguished by the name of *presence of mind,* or quick impulse of the nerve, is not only much improved, but may be acquired by a thorough knowledge and practice of the Graphic art, which cannot be so easily and so certainly attained, by application to the more popular studies and accomplishments. Even the acquisition of Shorthand, previous to its application in places of worship, or public assemblies, as well as its employment for common and daily purposes, contributes essentially to initiate the student in the principles of language and of composition. In learning the rules of abbreviation and connection,—in tracing the various modes

by which the same form of construction may be expressed,—in endeavouring to represent by abbreviated modes of junction, the dependance of the *verb* on the *pronoun,* or the government of the *nouns* and *articles* by the *prepositions,* the intelligent enquirer is insensibly instructed and confirmed in the principles of UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR, and revives and extends the knowledge of his native language. The student of Short-hand, who applies it to the purpose of committing to memory the most important facts of a scientific Lecture, in which the *matter,* and not the *form of expression,* is the most important object, will gradually attain a habit of promptly seizing the leading points of an instructive dissertation; of rejecting, with intuitive discernment, the common-place or unprofitable observations, and embodying, for future study, all that is curious, useful, and conducive to the extension of knowledge, or the correction of error.

Nor are its direct effects more striking or more important, than its direct utility. It gives form and permanence to the effusions

of the Orator, and the exhortations of the Divine; it embodies and perpetuates the eloquence of a BURKE, and extends through a wider circle, and to future generations, the pathetic and animated discourses of a PORTEUS and an ANDREWS. The judicial harangues of a MANSFIELD and a LOUGHBOROUGH, the medical discoveries of a MUNRO and a HUNTER, and the academical essays of a REYNOLDS and a BARRY, have been diffused, through the medium of Short-hand, over a wide expanse of legal, medical, and critical philosophy.

To students, in the learned and liberal professions, its acquisition is invaluable; and its employment, while it assists the pupil, stimulates the teacher. The individual, who has attained the highest honors of his profession, will think and speak (under the conviction that his most casual phraseology will become the object of public criticism,) with a precision of language, a clearness of arrangement, and a copiousness of materials, that he would otherwise have disdained to bestow on his casual and extemporary efforts.

In the usual routine of business, and the common intercourse of life, the advantages of secrecy and expedition are sufficiently obvious. It seldom happens that *Short-hand memoranda* fall (when lost or left open through inadvertence,) into the hands of those who can read them; and when the Stenographer has any reason for suspecting this event, it is easy, after having learned a good system, so to change its alphabet, and to modify its terminations, that it shall be illegible to all but the writer himself. The man of business, to whom every moment is of importance, and whose prosperity may depend on his ability to do much within a limited compass of time, will find (as was before observed) that object considerably facilitated by the substitution of Short-hand, for the common mode of writing; nor, if he resolves to obtain a perfect knowledge of the art, need he labour under any apprehension of inability to read his manuscript, (however hastily written) at any distance of time.

But, independent of its direct and indirect utility, the art of Short-hand is rendered a

necessary accomplishment, *to every rank of life above the lowest,* by that general diffusion, that was at first the consequence of its merits. Whatever may be the utility of any acquisition, no man, who aspires to an equality with his friends, will rest content without attaining it. To appear unacquainted with a science, now so generally prevalent and necessary, is a cause of humiliation, which no individual would undergo, but those who have formed an *erroneous and exaggerated estimate* of the difficulties that attend its acquisition.

The art, which is now called STENOGRAPHY, from two Greek words, ς ε ν ο ς *Stenos,* and γ ρ α φ ω *grapho,* (signifying contracted writing) derived, in all probability, its origin from the Greeks. It has been attempted to prove, from various passages of Scripture, that the art of Short-hand was familiar to the Hebrews; but the *Ready-writers* among the Jews were not, it would appear, acquainted with any mode of writing distinct from that which was generally practised in their native country. In after times, indeed, the Rabbies and transcribers of the Sacred Text, had re-

course to the junction of initials, distinguished from each other by a point at the place of contact; but this practice was long subsequent to the diffusion of the art among the nations of Europe, and was only exhibited in unconnected and desultory efforts. It has been generally concluded, that among the Greeks XENOPHON—the renowned commander of the *ten-thousand* who fought their way through the *hostile millions* of Asia, was the subtle inventor of the Stenographic art; and, that in recording the *Memorabilia* of SOCRATES, he was assisted by Stenographic memoranda. But there is no reason to deduce from any particular passage, or from the general tenor of his works, that he had recourse to any other mode of writing than the usual alphabet of his country: the conversations that he reports are evidently recorded from memory, with no inconsiderable degree of literary embellishment: nor is it probable that he would have adopted or invented the practice of Stenographic characters, without having left behind him some casual traces of their employment. Though it is certain, that the

art of abbreviation, and the employment of arbitrary marks, were known and practised by the Greeks; yet it does not appear that they were able, on any occasion, to follow a speaker, or to apply the discoveries they had made, to any useful and practical purpose. Their popular writers contain no allusion to Stenography, as a science adapted to the common purposes of life; or, as pre-eminently excelling the usual laborious modes of writing and transcribing. We have no remains of Grecian poetry or eloquence, transmitted to us through the medium of Short-hand; and we may therefore conclude, that its employment was confined to the curious and the scholastic. The abbreviations that are used in the printing of modern Greek, are in imitation of manuscripts, and have no greater reference to modern Short-hand, nor contribute more effectually to brevity and expedition, than the exploded method formerly so prevalent among our writing-masters of substituting a [*y*] with an [*e*] in the corner on its right [y^e] for the article [*the*]. It is probable, however, that these abbrevi-

ations, and particularly the custom of omitting several characters, and indicating that omission by an horizontal line, over the middle of the word, suggested to the Romans the first principles of Short-hand. In addition to this practice of the Greeks, the Romans adopted the use of two or more initials, placed close to each other (without intervening marks) but not joined, for the words themselves, as RP for *Res-Publicæ,* PR for *Populus Romanus,* SPQR for *Senatus Populus Quirites Romani.* They called these abbreviations by the name of *Notæ literæ,* (literal or alphabetical notes.) Besides these they had arbitrary characters to express words, and these were styled, *Notæ non literæ.* They still retained, however, their original alphabet; and though the poet Ennius and his immediate successors adopted particular characters to denote the terminations; as, *tionem, amus, eorum, earum, &c.* Yet it does not appear, that during the early period of Roman greatness, the use of a peculiar alphabet, that might be applied to the spelling as well as the abbreviation of words, was

introduced into the practice of Stenography. So important an addition to the art was reserved for the genius of a CICERO; it appears from several passages of his letters, that he was at first accustomed to communicate his sentiments to distant friends, in characters adapted only to the purposes of secrecy; and that having perceived the possibility of applying this alphabet to the purposes of Short-hand, his future letters were interspersed with passages that united the two great requisites of secrecy and expedition. The art, when thus perfected, was taught by CICERO to his freedman TYRO; and to him is ascribed the preservation of that noble monument of Roman eloquence, the speech of CATO against the proceedings of CÆSAR, respecting the conspiracy of CATALINE. Under every form, however, and during an extended period of Roman civilization, the art of Short-hand was practised and esteemed among that celebrated people. The *Notarii*, or Short-hand writers, were members of a numerous and respectable profession; and from the monarch to the peasant, the art was extended and understood.

AUGUSTUS and TITUS VESPASIAN were themselves proficients in the art; and its utility is celebrated by nearly all the writers, who flourished during the later periods of the Roman Empire. HORACE, addressing himself to a Stenographer, exclaims—"You write in such a manner that you have no occasion to ask in four whole years for another sheet of parchment." OVID, speaking of JULIUS CÆSAR, who wrote in Short-hand characters, applauds the use of an invention by which his letters were rendered illegible to his enemies. PRUDENTIUS, in giving an account of the death of CASSIENUS, who was murdered by his scholars, with the styles and tablets on which they were accustomed to write; observes that he was *'Verba notis brevibus, comprendere multa peritus, 'Raptimque punctis dicta, præpetibus sequi.'* — Skilful in combining many words in Short-notes, and rapidly to follow the words of a speaker, with appropriate points. But the most curious proof of the estimation in which Short-hand was held by the Romans, may be found in the verses of AUSONIUS, the preceptor of the EMPEROR GRATIAN, who died

in the year 386. These verses were in honor of a skilful Stenographer of his time; and accurately describe the nature and advantages of the art.—"Fly!" says he "young and famous Stenographer, prepare the tablets on which thou dost express, with simple points, entire discourses, with as much facility as others can express a single word. I dictate volumes, and my pronunciation is as compressed as the hail, yet nothing escapes thy ear, though thy pages fill not. Thy hand, of which the movement is scarcely visible, flies upon a surface of wax; and though my sentences are diffuse, and intricately constructed, thou dost embody my ideas on thy tablets before they have passed my lips. Is it possible that I cannot think as rapidly as you write!—Tell me then, since you outstrip my imagination, tell me, I say, who has betrayed me?—Who has revealed to thee my thoughts?—What thefts has not thy hand committed on my mind?—To what new order of things is it owing, that the words my mouth have not yet expressed, shall already have reached thy ears.?—No art, no precept,

surely could give thee this talent of abbreviation, for no other hand has the velocity of thine!—For this gift thou art doubtless indebted to nature and the gods! they only could permit that thou shouldst know what I think before I speak, and that thy will should spontaneously co-operate with mine!"—

The same causes that contributed to the excellence of Stenographers, have deprived the world of the benefit that might otherwise have been expected from their labors. The use of paper or parchment, at the first period of the art, was either totally unknown, or confined to a few select individuals of studious habits, or extensive wealth. Historical records, as well as mercantile memoranda, were too frequently committed to no more permanent security than a tablet covered over with a layer of wax, and written upon with an iron style. The facilities that such a mode of writing presented to the Stenographer, were as obvious as the fate of almost every composition, either originally written or transcribed on such perishable materials. After one speech had been taken down, and

been transcribed, the wax was rubbed smooth, so as to be ready for the transcription of another. Previous to the obliteration of the characters for this purpose, they would be copied by the decypherer into tablets like that on which they were first written, or on parchment. In the former of these cases they were erased, after being read and shewn to the curious, to make room for a subsequent composition: and in the latter they were deposited in the libraries of curious and wealthy individuals, and for want of public circulation, were lost amidst the revolutions of private property. Of all the splendid exhibitions, therefore, of extemporary eloquence that flowed from the lips of the Roman Orators, only *one* has been transmitted to us through the medium of Short-hand; and the Orations of Scipio, and the harangues of Marcus Antonius, have descended to us through the doubtful and suspicious intervention of later and sometimes fanciful historians.

Had not the imperfection of the art among the Greeks, or the perishable nature of the materials on which the compositions were tran-

scribed by the decypherers, deprived us of the noblest effusions of ancient genius; it is possible, that even the treasures that are now possessed by the liberal scholar, would have faded into comparative insignificance. The Orations of the ancient patriots and statesmen, were not like the Debates of an English House of Parliament; the mere display of political tactics, by a set of well-bred, sensible men, on common occasions, and with such uniformity of argument, that their speeches might be written before their delivery. They were the lofty and unpremeditated effusions of men endowed with powerful but often uncultivated minds; exposed to all the situations that may be supposed to call forth the powers of extemporaneous eloquence; energetic and original in their views; compelled to stand forward on subjects and occasions so novel as to preclude any reference to the conduct and opinions of preceeding statesmen: anxious to persuade, to menace, or to animate, according to the exigency of the moment; and unaccustomed to the study of oratory, as a daily, necessary, and unwelcome task.

Among the Greeks, the poems and harangues at the Pythian, Nemean, and Olympic games, would have excited the admiration of future ages, as they awoke the enthusiasm of assembled multitudes; and, while the lover of poetry received delight from the strains of an ARCHILOCHUS; the Philosopher and the Student would have dwelt with equal rapture on the colloquial wisdom or familiar conversation of a PERICLES and an ALCIBIADES.

The Gothic invaders of the Roman empire were alike indifferent to the study and unequal to the acquisition of a science, that presented to their view no new facilities to their warlike and predatory pursuits. Yet, it is not improbable, that some of the forms of abbreviation, so conspicuous in the ensigns and the public buildings of the Romans, might have been adopted by the victorious Goths, and added by those who afterwards enjoyed the spoils of war among the Saxons, to those that had been formerly introduced by the Roman conquerors. These were improved in process of time, into an imperfect system of Stenography; in which, there are still extant, an

inventory, and fifty-four charters of LEWIS the PIOUS, successor of CHARLEMAGNE; copies from the originals were engraved and published at Paris, in 1747, accompanied by an *Alphabeticum Tironianum,* to facilitate the progress of the reader.

The remains of French Stenography would have been still more numerous, had not the early practisers of the art been suspected (by the bigots of these superstitious ages) of witchcraft and sorcery. TRITHEMUS, whose works were burnt by FREDERIC the SECOND, the Elector Palatine, on suspicion of magic, informs us, that in his time, the Short-hand was confounded with the Armenian, or diabolical characters.

Whatever advances, however, may have been made by the French during the middle ages, in the practice of Stenography; it is certain, that between the fifteenth and latter end of the eighteenth century, the science was (in their country) totally unknown; and it is to the introduction of RICH's system (recommended by LOCKE) and a much later adaptation of TAYLOR's system, to the genius of

the French language, by THEODORE PIERRE BERTIN, (a work of very considerable merit), that they were first indebted for whatever knowledge of Stenography they may have since displayed.

There are no traces of the introduction into this country by the Romans, of the art itself. Their inscriptions, however, might suggest the introduction of similar abbreviations into the Saxon and English languages; and we find accordingly, that the substitution of an horizontal stroke over the preceding letter, for an M or an N, was adopted by our forefathers from the Romans. In addition to these, they had modes of abbreviation peculiar to the Norman and Saxon languages; [*yis*] for [*this*]; [*y*] with [*t*] in the right hand corner for [*that*]; [*y*] with [*u*] in a similar situation, for [*thou*]: [*wh*] and a dash for [*whether*], &c. are all to be found in the writing and printing of the fifteenth century. As the writing of that age, like that of the present time, till the adoption of some recent inventions, required a distinct and laborious movement for each letter, these modes of abbreviation seem intended

rather to relieve the labour of horizontal motion, than to contribute to the expeditious employment of the pen.

At length the first great step towards a rational System of Stenography (though it has in itself no claim to that appellation,) was accomplished by a Mr. RATCLIFF, of Plymouth; who formed to himself a species of Short-writing, by retaining the consonants of a word, and omitting the vowels. We have reason to believe, that this mode of abbreviation was practised by the Romans; but Mr. RATCLIFF derived his idea of its accomplishment from the Hebrew. He was not satisfied with merely omitting the vowels, but frequently contented himself with the use of the most emphatical syllables and letters, *e.g. Our Fth wch rt n hvn; hlwd b y Nm. Y Kgdm cm. Y wl b dn n rth z it s n Hvn. Gv z ths da r dly brd. Ad frgv z r trpss z we frgv y^m y^t trspss agst z. Ad ld z nt nto tmptin, bt dlvr z from evl; fr thn z ye Kgdm & ye pwr & ye glry fr evr & evr Amn.*

This method of abbreviation was entitled "A new Art of Short and Swift writing, with-

out Characters: by which Rules, a Common-hand will make such Expedition, that Sermons, Speeches or Tryals may be taken with delight, and plainly read." It contained 28 pages, in 8vo.; and was printed and published at London, in the year 1688, after the death of the author.

The publisher is not for confining persons *strictly* to *this* method: every ingenious person (he says) will vary the method according to his own fancy; he having a large liberty for a variation, to accomplish the design.

That from the period of this invention, till within a few years of the present time, the art of Short-hand should have remained in a state of comparative perplexity and imperfection, is a striking evidence of the merit that attaches to its later and more able professors. That which is easily taught and readily understood, not unfrequently requires for its perfection and improvement the most exalted powers of the human intellect; and while many of the modern systems may be imprinted on the mind of the youngest and most inattentive pupil, they must have re-

quired to their invention and perfection, the persevering exercise of the most splendid and various talents. An intimate acquaintance with the mechanism of language,—with the forms of grammatical construction,—with the laws and practice of elocution,—and with all the delicacies and peculiarities of his native idiom; that quickness of invention, and expertness of contrivance which enables him to adopt the most effectual expedients of abbreviation,—a perseverance that no obstacles can impede,—and a patience that renews its experiments after repeated failure;—are the indispensible requisites of the eminent Stenographer. Even after a system, to which the labour and attention of many years have been applied, has nearly arrived at its point of completion, it not unfrequently happens that the materials that ought to have formed the superstructure, have been expended on its foundation: and the inventor is obliged to pull to pieces the labour of many years, and re-commence his exertions on a different principle.

The charters of LEWIS the SIXTH, published by CARPENTIER, had distinct marks for every letter of the alphabet; and the Editor contends, that they are the same with those of TYRO, the freed-man of CICERO. Of this assertion, however, he produces no proof; and if these were in reality the characters employed by TYRO, it is impossible, that with their assistance, he could have embodied the speech of CATO. They are better adapted for secrecy than expedition; for while they occupy as much space as the common mode of writing, they are sufficiently distinct for private memoranda.

It was probably from these manuscripts, that Mr. TIMOTHY BRIGHT obtained the hint of characters peculiar to Short-hand;—though it must be admitted, that in the application of arbitrary marks, he far surpassed his original. But neither his ingenuity, nor that of Mr. PETER BALES, the author of a pretended Improvement, under the title of "BRACHYGRAPHY," could obviate the want of a Stenographic Alphabet.

BRIGHT's book, published in 1588, was entit-

led, "CHARACTERIE;* *An* ART *of Short, Swift, and Secret Writing, by Character.* Printed at London, in 12mo. by J. WINDET, the assign of TIMOTHY BRIGHT, with the privilege of the Queen, forbidding all others to print the same."

This Treatise was Dedicated to Queen Elizabeth: and the author tells her Majesty 'that CICERO did account it worthy his Labour, 'and no less profitable to the Commonwealth, 'to invent a speedy kind of Writing by Cha-'racter. And, that he, upon consideration of 'the great use of such a kind of writing, 'had invented the *like*, of *few Characters*, '*short*, and *easy*, every Character answering 'a word. His invention too (he observes) was 'mere *English*, without *Precept* or *Imitation* 'of any: and he hoped it wanted little to 'equal it with the old Device of CICERO'S 'but her Majesty's Allowance, and CICERO'S 'name.'

In his Preface to the Reader, the author observes 'Thou hast here, gentle Reader, 'the Art of short, and so of speedy Writing,

* *Brief* strokes and Marks to signify words.

'to which none is comparable, plainly deliv-
'ered unto thee; so as by thine own Industry
'thou mays't attain it, if thou wilt but one
'Month take pains therein: and by Continu-
'ance of another Month may'st thou attain
'to great Readiness.' The Book is divided into *two* parts: the *first* part treats on the production and variety of Characters, from the most *simple* and *plain,* to such as are *doubly compounded.* The *other* treats on the *value* of Characters with regard to their application and use. But the most curious part of this treatise, is a table containing about five hundred words, with the characters adjoined to them—thus;) *abound*: (*about*:) *accept*:) *accuse*:) *advance*: &c.—This table is intended to assist the student in the acquisition of the art; as the author observes in his instruction to the learner. 'These 'Characterical words (says he) thou art to 'get by heart, and therewith the making 'of the figure of the Character, so as to do 'it *readily* and *clean*: Then be able to join 'every character to the word pronounced, 'without book, or sight of any Pattern before

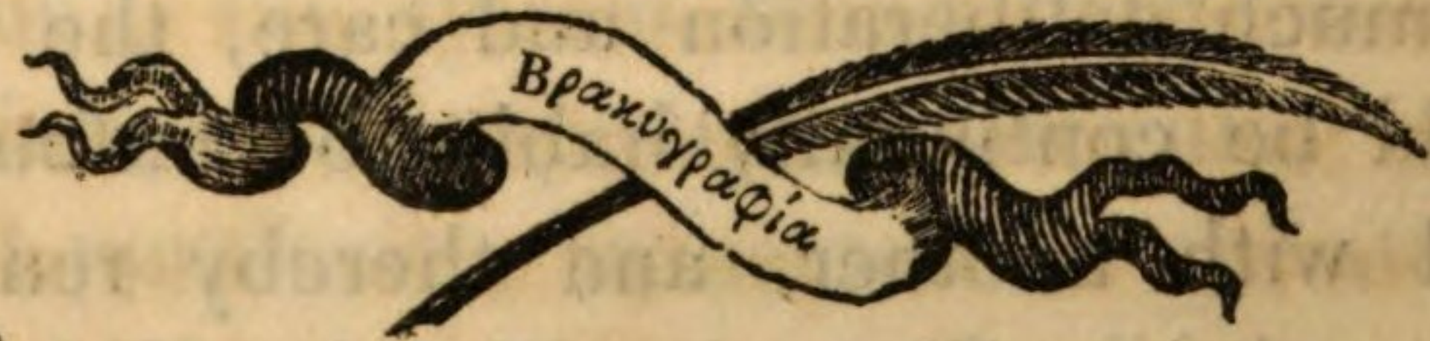
'thee. This done, thou art farther to proceed, 'and to learn how to refer either words of 'like Signification, or of the same Kind, or 'Contraries, unto those that be called Charac-'terie. Now because every man by his own 'reach, may not know how to refer all words, 'thou hast (says he) in this Book, an *English* 'Dictionary, with words of Reference already 'thereto annexed, to help such as cannot of 'themselves so dispose of them.' The author has divided his charactery words (alphabetically) into dozens, (to be committed to memory,) and distinguishes them by their *forms* and *positions;* which must have been extremely tedious to the learner, burthensome to his memory, and inconsistent with the principal design of this art. And, notwithstanding the author has displayed considerable ingenuity in his production (for an Original Invention), the system being built on a bad foundation, and wrapt up in obscurity, confusion and perplexity, presented to the student impediments so numerous and discouraging, that nothing but a determined resolution, together with intense application, was suffi-

cient to overcome. To acquire a knowledge of the art (by this method) in such a degree of perfection as to render it at all useful, as much time and attention must have been requisite as is necessary for the accomplishment of a new language.

The method adopted by BALES, was to divide the words into dozens, each dozen headed by a *Roman letter*, with certain *commas, periods,* and other *marks,* which were to be placed about each letter, in their appropriate situations, so as to distinguish the words from each other. This method, (like the former) was extremely burthensome to the memory; and could only be acquired by unremitted assiduity, and retained in the mind by continual practice: and even then, the difficulty of placing the various marks of distinction in their exact places, was so great, that without much deliberation and care, the student would be continually liable to confound one word with another, and thereby render his manuscript totally unintelligible. This "*Art of Brachygraphy*" which was printed at London, In quarto, by T. ORWIN, and published in

1590, was shortly afterwards succeeded by an Improvement thereon, entitled "*A New Year's Gift for England.*"

Having thus attempted to point out the universal advantages of Short-hand, and to trace the history of this art from the earliest ages of the world to the date of the publications immediately preceding that important æra, the discovery of a Short-hand Alphabet, by JOHN WILLIS; I shall proceed to trace its gradual progress and improvement from the year 1600, to the present time; pointing out, as I proceed, the peculiar excellencies and defects of the various systems, and suggesting the most rational principles on which a PERFECT SYSTEM is likely to be founded.



LEWIS'S
HISTORICAL ACCOUNT
OF
SHORT - HAND.

SECTION II.

SHORT-HAND, after having passed from Rome to England, has been distinguished by a great variety of names, selected chiefly from the Greek language; and Treatises have been given to the world under the titles of Tachygraphy — Brachygraphy — Semigraphy — Criptography—Bodiography—Zeiglography—Polygraphy—Zeitography—Radiography—Thoography—and Stenography; some of which are not destitute of considerable merit; but even those that have accomplished the most, have left much to be performed. The alphabets are, in general, unskilfully selected; composed of lines, either difficult to be formed, complex in their figure, unadapted for easy

and expeditious joining, or liable, from their uniformity to be continually mistaken for each other. The most distinct and simple lines are, in the ancient systems, frequently chosen to represent the letters that rarely occur, while the M, the N, the S, and the T, are indicated by illegible and unsightly characters. Many of their authors have endeavoured to retain, without abridgement, the silent and superfluous vowels, which only contribute to retard the writing, and distract the attention of the learner and the professor, by endless perplexities. Some of the most popular and celebrated systems require the elevation of the pen in the middle of a word, and with every preposition and termination.

But the great defect of the majority of the modern systems of Short-hand, is the introduction of symbolical and arbitrary characters for particular words and phrases, instead of expressing them by the regular and judicious employment of alphabetical signs. The first Inventor of these symbols, was probably reduced to the necessity of employing them, by the awkward and inelegant manner in which

(from the imperfections of his alphabet) many important words were necessarily expressed. This mode of abbreviation was adopted by SENECA, whose memory was so tenacious, that he retained in his remembrance no fewer than *five thousand symbols,* and could repeat (as was before observed) *two thousand words in any order, after once hearing them pronounced:* but it is not adapted to the common capacities of men; nor is it productive of greater brevity than is accomplished by the alphabet. It will appear, indeed, on comparing the symbols of ANGELL and GURNEY, with the same words as represented by a systematic and judicious alphabet, that the latter are more easily formed, and are distinguished by superior elegance and distinctness. The writer, who trusts only to his alphabet, and has acquired the requisite facility of combination, will never be at a loss in the formation of his words, or in decyphering what he has written, at any period of time, however distant: while the use of symbols fatigues the memory—confuses the understanding—and renders the manuscript unintelligible,

in a few days after it is laid aside:—They require the most unremitted practice; and there have been frequent examples of individuals, who had devoted many years to the mastery of a few hundred symbols, who, after a short interval of time, during which they had not leisure or inclination to practice, and have, on resuming the use of the pen, found, that the greater number of these arbitrary characters had escaped their memory.

Nor are these the only errors and defects that have impeded the progress of Stenography. While some of its teachers have merely committed to the public a simple alphabet, unaccompanied by elucidation or direction;—others have been accustomed to bewilder and confound the reader by the complexity of their rules, and the absurd variety of their modes of abbreviation. It has been recommended for the learner to join together five or six words, and in cases where extreme celerity is required, to use only the initial letters:—But experience has shewn, that the professors of these modes of abbreviation are rather indebted for their moderate

success to the excellence of their individual memories, than to the advantages of their system; and, that a series of initials, or connected words, will not be remembered by the majority of students in the art, above a few minutes after they are committed to paper.

That these observations are not dictated by any other motives than an ardent desire to extend the utility of the art, and to support its interests, by marking the distinction between the obstacles placed to its acquisition by ignorance and negligence, and the inherent difficulties really attending it, will best appear from a candid, but cursory review of the various systems which have been committed to the world, from the period of the first invention of a Short-hand alphabet, to the present time; and if, in the course of this review, it shall become my duty to display the errors, and elucidate the imperfections, of many able and learned predecessors, let it not be imputed to any want of just respect for their labours and abilities, or the presumption that myself have

escaped many mistakes and inadvertences of a different nature, though of equal magnitude, with those of the more celebrated professors of the art. Improvement, in any branch of useful science, can only arise from the determination of every student who devotes his attention to its pursuit: to take nothing on mere authority; to investigate the reasons and the principles of every rule and system, that may be submitted to his judgment; to deduce his own conclusions from such an enquiry; and to aim at such improvements, as may most completely remedy the deficiencies, and correct the mistakes which he discovers. With this passing apology, I shall now proceed to exhibit a general view of the various systems; accompanying my observations, where it is necessary, by such strictures as may be required on their several peculiarities.

The earliest example of a Short-hand alphabet is to be found in a work, entitled "*The Art of Stenographie, or Short Writing, by Spelling Characterie, Invented by* JOHN WILLIS, *Batchelor in Divinitie.*" of which the

Eighth Edition was printed at *London* in 12mo for HENRY SEILE, in 1623. The *first* Edition is older, as we are informed in the Preface, by twenty-one years: so that it must have been published in the year 1602. There are twenty-four *leading letters,* as he calls them, and five others. The author begins by shewing what letters may be omitted, because they are superfluous, or imperfectly sounded. Then he proceeds to shew how the needful letters of all words are to be expressed. This he does *distinctly,* with respect to words of *one, two, three,* or *more* syllables; and particularly as to monosyllables, that are *produced,* that is to say, pronounced as having in them a *long* vowel or diphthong. He points out a mode of distinguishing *them* from words written with the same letters, whose vowels are short; *viz.* by placing the dot on the right or left side of the consonant. Moreover, the author has made a distinction between small characters and great, which, in the rapidity of composition, cannot be attended to; and he distinguishes the greater number of his vowels and diphthongs by the junction

of the small character to the large, or the large to the small, in various positions. If the word begins with a vowel, the small character of the consonant is affixed to the great character of the vowel; if a consonant begins the word, the great character of the consonant preceeds the small character of the vowel; for instance, ∧*a*, ∩*b*, ∧∩*ab*, ∩∧*ba*. On the uncertainty and the slowness of this mode of junction it is unnecessary to descant, and the rest of his contrivances are equally clumsy and useless, particularly his *symbolicals* and *special* abbreviations, consisting of ten alphabets, which he denominates *Words of Sort;* and which are severally expressed by what he calls *Defectives:* the first seven of *these* are signified by their *first* letters, large and small, Stenographical, Roman, Secretary, or other unusual letters: the three last alphabetical lists, by their *first and second* letters, by their *first and last,* and by symbolical figures. But his great imperfection is the want of simplicity and facility in his alphabet. A compound character should never be used in forming a system of Short-hand, until all

the simple lines of nature are exhausted: yet it is evident that the very first four letters of WILLIS's alphabet are compounds of more simple characters, into which they might be resolved. The ∧ *a* is a compound of / and \: the ∩ *b* of ⌈ and ⌉: the ¬ *d* of — and | : the < *e* of ⟋ and ⟍: nor is this their only defect; his — *r*, when combined with his | *s*, thus ¬, so as to make *rs*, forms a character exactly similar to the *d*, and is therefore liable to be continually mistaken for it. The same absurdity occurs in many of the other letters; and has been handed down from one Short-hand writer to another, notwithstanding its evident inconvenience and total preclusion of distinctness and legibility. It is remarkable, that so strange an anomaly should occur in every system except MACAULAY's, from WILLIS to the reformation of the art by BYROM. The complexity of WILLIS's alphabet, the inconvenience of his method of distinguishing the vowels; and the confused and laborious contrivances by which he denotes his prepositions and terminations, continually taking off the pen, render this mode of writing infinitely

slower, and much more unsightly than the Common-hand. A few instances will prove the correctness of this assertion, ..∩ᵖ⁺ᵗ *Emboldened;* ⌒⌣ *Allurement;* ⊥⊙ *Garrison;* ∫. ⊥ *Stenography, &c.*

As this book is an original of the kind, and now extremely difficult to be procured; I have given a more particular account of it than would otherwise have been necessary. What the author's opinion was of *this* production, and his elucidation thereof, which he published in 1623, under the title of "*A Schoolmaster to the Art of Stenography: Explaining the Rules and teaching the Practice thereof, to the understanding of the meanest capacity.*"—may be gathered from his "*Preface to the Reader,*" the whole of which is here literally transcribed.

'It is now (says he) twenty-one years since 'first was published this *Art of Stenography,* 'being the first Book of *Spelling Charactery* 'that ever was set forth. Since which time, 'many others, taking their fundamental rules 'from this book, have sought to better the 'invention, by changing the figure, power,

' or places of the literal characters, and by
' the various affixing of them one to another:
' (as indeed the art by such means may be
' infinitely varied: *Et facile est inuentis ad-*
' *dere.)* Howbeit I am confident in this per-
' suasion, that as this *Art of Stenography* was
' the first, that ever gave direction for any
' form of *Spelling Characterie,* so it shall
' continue the last, and wear out all the
' aberrations thereof published or taught by
' any other.

' And therefore I have thought good, after
' so many several editions of this art, now
' to set the last hand thereunto, with purpose
' never to alter it hereafter. For which cause
' I have diligently perused the several editions,
' and conferred them together, for the per-
' fecting of this last, and (without doubt) best
' edition: changing that which seemed fit
' to be changed, omitting that which was
' to be omitted, and adding that which was
' to be added. Alleging, for excuse of the
' divers alterations which I have made in
' setting forth this art, that no art is brought
' to perfection at the first, but by long obser-

'vation, practice and experience, with in-
'duction of manifold examples, according
'to that of the poet:

'*Per varios casus artem experientia fecit,*
'——— *Exemplo monstrante viam.*

'Finally, for the better helping of them
'in the study and practice of this art, which
'are enforced to learn it of themselves without
'a Teacher: I have published another book,
'called *The Schoolmaster to the Art of Steno-*
'*graphy.* Wherein every particular thing
'questionable touching this art, or any point
'therein, is so explained, as I think it scarce
'possible for any to meet with a doubt con-
'cerning the practice thereof, which is not
'therein fully satisfied. And, if any man find
'aught left out in this Edition, which was in
'any of the former, that might serve any way
'to instruct a learner, or to clear doubts
'touching this art; let him assure himself
'to find it there.'

Notwithstanding the very high opinion the author had conceived of his production, every judicious and attentive reader must think it liable to many great objections. And though

that work was much valued for near forty years, (having passed through the tenth edition) it never could be taken for a finished performance—unless by the author himself.

One of the most scarce and curious works that has appeared on the subject of Short-hand, is the production of EDMOND WILLIS. It is embellished with a frontispiece, representing the sun, encircled by the motto—*Sol Lux Mundi.* On one side of the engraved page are a boy and an aged man reading and recording the Scripture: and on the other side, are two similar persons taking down their discourses in Short-hand. Inscriptions are placed at the foot of these representations, indicative that improvement and facility in whatever we undertake, are the result of previous labour. The title of the work is "*An Abbreviation of Writing by Character, wherein is summarily conteyned a table which is an Abstract of the whole Art; with plaine and easie Rules for the speedie performance thereof without any other tutor.*" The first edition was printed at London, in 12mo. by

George Purslowe, and published in 1618. The preface contains an impartial review of the *three* preceeding systems, and concludes with these observations. 'For mine own part (says 'the author) I must and do confess myself 'but a mean *Scholar* in comparison of others: 'yet such hath been my labour and earnest 'desire for fourteen years past to attain to 'some perfection in the art of Short-hand, 'that I have not failed to seek to all who 'have made a profession of teaching it in 'this City. Besides, I think I have written 'as much myself as any man in the City: 'yet could I never find any perfection, or 'plainness of Rule, whereby to manifest it 'to others, until now of late.'—And in the Dedication to the Bishop of Bristol, he tells him 'that he hopefully conceived at least, 'he had by long study and perusal of books, 'attained to a *more perfect* and compendious 'mode of abbreviated Writing by character, 'than he had yet seen.' This Mr. Willis has an alphabet, consisting of twenty-four *leading letters* (as he calls them) and five *small ones,* and he expresses both *vowels* and

diphthongs by dots or letters placed about a character, in the following situations:—

ai	*ea*
a	
ee	*e*
oi	*i*
oo	*o*
u	
au	*ou*

His first edition is little more than an alteration from the system of his namesake JOHN WILLIS: but the second edition, (which made its appearance nine years afterwards) while it much simplifies the characters, contains a number of marks (drawn from the alphabet) to represent the *double and treble consonants* that begin and end words: likewise an ingenious selection of prepositions and terminations; a table elucidating their utility, and two-hundred words arranged in sentences, composed chiefly of arbitrary characters: ƒ ⊃ ∪. ☡ h ⊃ ϟ. γ ⊼ represents *Fear and Love God: Honor and Obey your King*. He expresses the plural of words by two points, thus ⊿ ⊃: *answers*: which of course occupies more time than to affix the ϟ He assures the reader that by long practice in his art, he has found that in most words which begin with a double consonant, the second letter is for the most part *l* or *r*: an observation that ought to be imprinted

on the memory of every Stenographer. This however is not the case when the word begins with *s*, and one or two other letters.

He again observes, that when any of these consonants *h, l, m, n, r,* begin any word whatsoever, the next letter following is always a vowel. He advises the learner, (for better perfection in his art) when he hears a word spoken in company, to consider in his mind how he would express the same in Short-hand writing; a custom that would materially contribute to readiness and rapidity; as he had found from his own experience.

His preface to the second edition evinces him to have been a man of talents and learning; and, as far as can be deduced from his own language, of exemplary piety. He congratulates himself on the success of his labours, in the following passage:—'I have 'now by further enlargement of this book, 'brought it forth stronger limbed and more 'able to do the world service; for the ad-'vancement of those public ends whereunto 'my desires have wholly levelled, God's glory 'and the benefit of many thousand souls in

'the posterities to come, when myself shall 'return to him that made me, and be ga-'thered to the sepulchres of my fathers.' After animadverting on the propensity of the age to slander and envy, he proceeds as follows:—'But I thank God I have that 'testimony within myself which shall be as a 'good tide to take me off from such shelves. 'My testimony is mine own conscience, and 'my judgement is with the Lord, that my 'intentions are not hereby to sound a trumpet 'before myself but only to do somewhat for 'public good which may further mine accounts 'at the last day, that I have not altogether 'runne here in vaine, nor laboured to no 'purpose. And so commending these direc-'tions in all humble submission to thy favour-'able acceptation and thyself with them to 'the gracious blessing of our God whose '*characters* we all are, I rest thine,

'EDMOND WILLIS.'

According to the usual practice of those times, there is affixed to WILLIS's publication a poetical tribute to the author's excellence; and as it presents a striking specimen of the

quaintness and addiction to punning which characterised the inferior versifiers of that age, its quotation may not be unacceptable :—

'That which so many have desir'd to gaine,
'By wit and labour of the mind and braine,
'And yet could not, by Reason's careful eye
'Find where the depth of Truth's perfections lie:
'*Thou* hast by art, upon such judgment grounded,
'And so exact a method has propounded
'By *Characters*, to write with such a speed,
'As may of *all* be thought a worthy deed:
'In which rare art, may well be understood,
'How WILLIS *Will-is* to do all men good.'

'MARTIN BILLINGSLEY.'

A person named WITT composed a treatise on Short-hand; which made its appearance in 1630. This book is so difficult to be obtained, that very few persons have had an opportunity of procuring a sight of it. We find it mentioned, however, by MR. COLES, and a copy of the alphabet is given in his publication; from which it will appear that MR. WITT had made no essential or material difference in the conciseness or distinctness of his characters.

In 1633, Mr. Henry Dix published a book of Short-hand (intended as an improvement of Mr. Willis's) entitled "*A new art of Brachygraphy, or Short Writing by Character..*" He proposes a different method of placing the vowels, and is very particular with respect to what letters are, or are not, necessary to be expressed. His Rules are exhibited by question and answer; but his system differs in no very material point from that of Willis. He was succeeded by

Mr. Mawd, who published a small treatise on Short-hand in 1635, which exhibited a like improper choice of alphabetical marks, contained all the principal errors and defects of his predecessors, and is in every respect liable to the same objections.

Mr. William Folkingham succeeded Mr. Mawd, and published a book of Short-hand, entitled "*Brachygraphy, Post writ.*" There is nothing in this production that deserves particular notice; the alphabet is formed on the model of his predecessors, and displays

all their imperfections. The instructions are brief, superficial, and in some respects, rendered extremely complex. The author proposes to express the *initial vowels by dots,* instead of representing them by alphabetical marks; still, however, retaining the characters to denote the *intermediate and final vowels,* according to the usual method.

In 1641, Thomas Shelton published his "*Tachygraphy the most exact and compendious method of short and swift writing that hath ever yet been published by any.*" In 1642, appeared "*A Tutor to Tachygraphy, or Short Writing; wherein the Rules of the said art, are severally explained by way of Questions and Answers, to the weakest capacities that desire to learn the Art.*" And in 1650 he published another book, which he calls "*Zeiglographia: or, A new Art of Short writing never before published. More easie, exact, short and speedie than any heretofore.*" These systems (like all the foregoing) appear to be unadapted to the principal ends for which this art is intended; i. e. *Brevity and Expedition.* The author has paid no attention

	J. Willis 1602.	E. Willis 1618.	Witt 1630.	Dix 1633.	Manwd 1635.	Folkingnm 16
a	^	/	^	^	^	
b	∩	|	|	⌒	⌒	
c	⌐|	(	⌐	⌐		
d	¬	)	)	¬	¬	
e	<	ε	∘∂	ε	e	
f	⌊	7	¬	⌊	⌊	
g	⌋	4	4	⌋	⌋	
h	○	h	<	0	9	
i	∝	ı	⌐	1	⌐	
j	>	ı	4	1	⌐	
k	⌐	⌒	⌒	<	)	
l	⊃	∪	∪	⊂	∪	
m	∪	\	\	∪	\	
n	\	n —	—	\	(	
o	(	o c	⊂	(	/	
p	/	ρ σ	(	⊃ σ	4	
q	0	9	q	4		
r	—	r	r	—	—	
s	|	s	ρ	|	|	
t	⊂	⌐|	/	/	(	
u	ℓ	•	•	•	•	
v	v	v	v	v	v	
w	)	)	q	)	)	
x	∞	∝	⌃	∞	ℓ	
y	γ	y	y	γ	∝	
z	z	z	z	z	z	

Alexander sc. 20c. Strand.

to the selection of his alphabetical characters, or to their judicious application. The greater number of those marks he has made choice of to represent the letters, are of a complex form, and represent *two other letters joined;* and such as are simple in their form are improperly applied. His Characters for "*Double Consonants to begin and end words,*" are constructed from those of the alphabet. His prepositions and terminations have the defect of requiring more labour in their formation than would be required to spell the syllables in full, and are easily mistaken for each other. He is also extremely fond of arbitrary characters, such as for *ceremony;* for *darkness;* for *delivered;* for *fulfilled;* for *omnipotent;* for *yesterday.* Notwithstanding these imperfections, he informs us that his scholars had treasured up, for the instruction of posterity, the admirable discourses of several learned and pious divines. If it were possible, by the system laid down in his productions, to follow a speaker, no student of the art (whatever may be the slowness of his capacity) need despair, by any modern method, to follow a speaker (with

correctness) of the greatest vehemence and fluency. The alphabet, the prepositions, and the modes of abbreviation adopted by SHELTON, require, at least, three times the patience in learning, and twice the number of strokes that are required in the systems of TAYLOR or BLANCHARD. Nor must it be regarded as any proof of the advantage of SHELTON's mode that he may have written it with expedition and facility. The practice of twenty years, even in a bad system, must confer a readiness and rapidity that will compensate for its defects. The system of MR. GURNEY is one of the worst that dulness and negligence ever obtruded on the world; but the extensive practice, and the extraordinary talent of his relatives, have enabled them to perform wonders with an imperfect and erroneous compendium of the art.

The next person who appeared as an author of Short-hand was MR. THEOPHILUS METCALFE: whose first production made its appearance in 1645, under the title of "*Radio-Stenography or Short writing: The most easie, exact,*

lineal and speedy method that hath ever been obtained or taught." This book is adorned with a portrait and an engraved title, executed in the manner of the age in which he lived. The title page contains an engraving of the Ten Commandments in Short-hand, and a representation of the Lord's Prayer, written according to his system, within the circumference of a six-pence. Beneath his portrait are the following lines:—

'Cæsar was prais'd for his dexterity
'In feates of warr and martial Chevalry:
'And no less famous art thou for thy skill
'In nimble turning of thy silver quill;
'Which with the Preacher's mouth holds equal pace,
'And swiftly glides along until the race
'Of his discourse be run, so that I thinke
'His words breath'd from his mouth are turn'd to ink.'

In 1649, the same author presented to the world a small volume, which is chiefly explanatory of his other production, and is entitled "*A Schoolmaster to Radio-Stenography, Explaining all the Rules of the said art, by way of Dialogue betwixt Master and Scholler, fitted to the weakest capacities that are desirous to*

learn this art." His system resembles that of SHELTON, in its general principles; and his alphabet exhibits another striking example of the unskilfulness with which the early Stenographers adopted the most difficult and complex characters when the simple ones were within their reach. Almost every letter of what he is pleased to term his system of Short-hand, requires, even when unconnected, as much time for its formation as the common alphabetical characters. His *a* is formed thus ∧ his *b* thus < and his *e* after the old fashioned mode of making that character ℰ His double letters, as *br* ⊂ require twice the time of the common characters to express them, and would denote three words in any modern system. The *r* is of the same shape as in the vulgar alphabet, except that it is more angular and consequently more difficult to be made. The *g* which might have been easily expressed by ∪ or | is composed of the combination of the two ⊔ which, of course, requires double the time than is necessary for its formation.

But the greatest absurdity of his system arises from his denoting the vowel place, by

taking off the pen and placing the second consonant in the position allotted to the vowel. He marks these positions in this manner, *a* . *e* *i* *o* *u* and when he wishes to write the word *back*, he places his *b* < and his *c* ∩ in this relative position ⌒ *back*. Now, as it would be difficult to ascertain, in an example of this kind, which of the characters is designed to precede the other; since ⌒ might express the word *cub* as well as *back*; he is reduced to the necessity of employing, in addition to the regular alphabet, another series of characters for *double letters* at the *beginning* and *ending* of words, which characters require more time and labour than the combination of two single letters; for instance, his *s* ! and *n* — when combined are shorter than his double character ⅂ *sn*. On comparing this and similar treatises, it will appear that the majority of them require the pen to be taken off in the middle of a monosyllable; that the characters are confused, unsightly, and more difficult to form than the common running-hand, that they abound in arbitrary contractions and unmean-

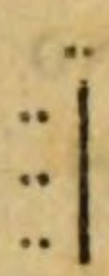
ing syllables, which burthen the memory and baffle the sagacity of the student, and that after the experience of many years it is almost impossible to decypher them.

The next in succession (whose celebrity entitles him to notice) is Mr. Jeremiah Rich, whose system obtained the valuable eulogy of that great philosopher and glory of his country, the immortal Locke. He published two works; the first of which made its appearance in 1654, entitled "*Semigraphy or Arts Rarity; proved by many honourable persons, and allowed by the Learned to be the easiest exactest and briefest method of Short and Swift Writing that ever was known.*" In an Epistle of recommendation prefixed to this work and signed by seven persons, notice is taken of the trial of Mr. John Milbourn, at the Old Bailey, which Mr. Milbourn affirmed before many gentlemen to be *exactly* taken by Mr. Rich. The other production entitled "*The Pen's Dexterity: or, The Ingenious and useful Art of writing Short-hand. Approved by both Universities. Practised by*

Honourable Persons, Reverend Divines, Eminent Lawyers, and Gentlemen." was published in 1669, and is far superior to its predecessor. This book is embellished with a portrait, beneath which are the following lines:—

'Here Active, and Mysterious Art you see,
'Contracted in a small Epitomie;
'Soon Gain'd with practice; thus ye meanest Wit
'Makes a Diversion of a Benefit.
'Thus either Sex, or Age may, old or young,
'With Nimbler Pen, out-post the Nimble Tongue.
'Thus to thy Lasting Fame it shall be said;
'RICH *lives in Characters*, when RICH be dead.'

The peculiar excellence of RICH and his followers, is asserted by themselves to consist in certain rules for contracting sentences by dots and marks placed around the characters. If you would write, for instance, "*to come to God.*" The mark for *God* is ϟ and on the left-hand of that mark you place a dot, thus ˙ϟ If you wish to write "*Depart from Christ,*" make a ⨯ for *Christ*, and place a dot on the right-hand to signify *Depart from* ⨯˙ A dot *above* is used to express *over* and *upon*; a dot *below* to express *understand*; and two dots (..) in a *fourfold* situation, thus



serve to express *men* or *sons, saints, women* or *daughters, mind* or *will, believers* or *belief, servants, children, people.* In like manner the character — *m,* by a *fourfold* situation, may express *majesty, misery, mercy, multitude.* This mode of abbreviation, however, has one great and incurable defect: it is impossible to take down the words of the speaker until he has pronounced the whole sentence; the last word being that on which the other contractions entirely depend. Suppose it be required, for instance, to express *The Sons of God,* it will be necessary to write the *G* for *God* before the *dots* can be made at the side as a character for *Sons.* In fact, it is indispensibly requisite to the perfection of a system of Short-hand, that the word or sentence which is first pronounced should be the first written.

In 1654, a Treatise was published by JOHN FARTHING, entitled "*Short Writing Shortened; or, the Art of Short Writing reduced to a method more speedy, plain, exact, and easie, than hath been heretofore published.*" This is a hasty and superficial compendium, and could only have been serviceable to his private pupils.

In the year 1656, Mr. George Dalgarno made an attempt to improve the art of Short-hand writing, by expressing the auxiliary particles of the English language by distinct points placed in various situations about the radical words. *

Among many other systems, which their utter destitution of merit and utility have long consigned to deserved oblivion, the most conspicuous was a production that appeared in 1658, entitled "*An Epitome of Steno-graphie; or, an abridgement and contraction of the Art of short, swift, and secret Writing by Characters, both fair, lineal, and legible, as will appear hereafter, as well as in the prefixt example.*" This prefixt example is a curious specimen of the quaintness so prevalent in all scholastic pursuits at the period in which he lived; and if it have no other merit, may claim, at least, the praise of persevering industry. As for the book of Job Everardt, it would require the patience of

* See Plot's History of Oxfordshire, page 82.

	Shelton 1641.	Shelton 1650.	Metcalfe 1645.	Rich 1654.	Rich 1669.	Farthing 1654.
a	^	<	^		/	C
b	|	⌒	<		|	⌒
c	⌐	>	C		C	10
d	⊃	\	⊃		⊃	⊃
e	ɤ	e	ɤ		o	ɤ
f	⌉	L	L		⌉	⌉
g	ɥ	^	ɥ		ɥ	⌒
h	<	o	oh		h	ɔ
i	L	⌐	1		.	L
j	L	^	1		ɥ	L
k	⌒	C	⌒		⌒	|
l	⌣	—	⌣		⌣	⌣
m	\	⊃	\		—	C
n	—	/	—		—	\
o	C	⌣	e		v	^
p	ɔ	ρ	ρσ		σ	—
q	ɔ	ɔ	⌉		ɔ	⌉
r	r	r	r		ρ	r
s	ρ	σ	ɔ|		⌐	o
t	/	|	/		/	/
u	v	v	v		\	
v	v	v	v		\	v
w	⌊	(	7		L	⊃
x	x	ϱ	∞		⌒	ϱ
y	y	ɣ	ɣ		y	ɣ
z	z	z	z		z	z

Alexander sc. Sculp.

Job himself to read his work a second time, or to study its instructions. It contains, however, one uncommon curiosity:—A table of the words "*But the just shall live by his faith*" in thirty-three languages, with their translation into Short-hand. He falls into the same error with his predecessors, in using compound characters, which cannot be distinguished from the combination of his simple ones. His vowels are nearly the same in shape and require the same time in formation as those of the common English alphabet, a ə ı o ʊ ʃ while he admits these unsightly characters, which are as difficult to join as unpleasant in appearance, he has two *a's*, two *s's*, two *t's* and two *u's*, intended as he asserts, for the further beauty and easiness of writing. Of all the systems of Short-hand already noticed, this appears to be decidedly the worst, and is equally destitute of neatness, distinctness, and rapidity. How any man could sit down deliberately to write a system of Short-hand, and not by mere accident produce something better, is utterly incomprehensible. !

In 1659, Mr. Noah Bridges published a little work, entitled "*Stenographie and Cryptographie; or, The Arts of Short and Secret Writing,*" which, notwithstanding the alphabet displays all the imperfections that have been already noticed in his predecessors, exhibits a great and important improvement in the art. He is the first who regularly expressed the vowels by dots, and paid some attention to the appearance of the writing. He has rendered his system, however, extremely confused and difficult, by his mode of distinguishing one word from another, which consists in making a dot on the right or the left side of the consonant, as best suits his purpose. This method is totally inconsistent with swiftness; and he has therefore adopted a great number of deficient, arbitrary, and symbolical characters; which he leaves it for his readers to practice or reject. His Cryptography has no connection with his Short-hand; but is a dry, superficial, and uninstructive essay on the various modes of secret writing.

In 1672 Mr. William Facy presented to the world "*The Completement of Stenography, in a new Art of Charactery, being a more speedier, swifter, and compendious method of Short-writing than heretofore hath been by any other composed.*" Mr. Facy, like many others, appears highly pleased with his own performance; but a slight perusal of it will convince any one who will take the trouble of examining with attention, and comparing his system with others much more ancient, that he has made no real improvement upon his predecessors.

The most celebrated Short-hand writer of the 17th Century was William Mason. His first book is entitled "*A Pen pluck't from an Eagle's wing: or, The most swift, compendious and speedy method of Short-writing.*" After laying down the alphabet and some general rules, there is what he calls the practical table of words and sentences in alphabetical order, to the amount of eleven-hundred and thirty-two. The characters for which, are for the most part arbitrary. This publication

made its appearance in 1672, and was chiefly founded on the system of RICH, whose Stenography was at that period extremely popular: but the experience of a few years convinced him, that the basis of that Gentleman's system was too *narrow;* and he therefore proceeded to the composition of "*Arts Advancement: or, The most exact, lineal, swift, short, and easy method of Short-hand writing, hitherto extant.*" This work was published in 1682, is adorned with a portrait, an ornamented frontispiece, and an engraved dedication to the Corporation of London; underneath the portrait are the following encomiastic lines:—

'Let SHELTON, RICH, and all the rest go down,
'Bring here your Golden Pen and Laurel Crown.
'Great MASON's nimbler Quill out-strips ye Winde,
'And leaves ye Voyce, almost ye Thoughts behind.
'In vain may MOMUS snarl; He soars on high:
'Praise he commands, and Envy does defie.

His last and most important work is an improvement upon this: It was published in 1707, under the title of "*La Plume volante, or the Art of Short-hand Improved,*" is embellished with a portrait in wood, and is

illustrated by "*A Regular and Easie Table of Natural Contractions, by the Persons, Moods, and Tenses. Each Character made from the Alphabet and Vowels places. The like never done by any other hand.*" * In this table, from which many useful hints towards the perfection of Stenography may be obtained, the tenses are denoted by the position in which they are placed, after or before the pronoun. His mode, however, is too complex for purposes of general utility, and is rendered liable to continual misapprehension from the ambiguity of his alphabet, which retains many of the faults, without supplying the deficiences of his predecessors. The following is a specimen of his mode of abbreviating the moods and tenses: A dot . is *i*, and ·)¹ is *I may be*: ⌝ *thou*, ⌝)¹ *thou may'st be*: ⌞ *he*, ⌞)¹ *he may be*: ⌜ *she*, ⌜)¹ *she may be*:). *I may*:

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* This "*Engraved Table of Contractions*" was published prior to "*La Plume volante;*" and in 1695 the Author (to assist persons in using these) published a *Key* to them, in a little book that he calls "*Aurea Clavis, or a golden Key to the Cabinet of Contractions, unlocking all the Mysteries (and seeming difficulties) of an Engraven Sheet of Short hand lately published, entituled A Regular and Easy Table of Natural Contractions, &c.*"

	Everardt 1658.	Bridges 1659.	Facy 1672.	Mason 1672.	Mason 1682.	Mason 1707.
a	a ⌄	c		/	/	/
b	1	⌒		1	⌒	1⌒
c	⊂	⊂1			c	c
d	⊃	⊃		⊃	\	\
e	∂	∂		○	⟨	✓
f	⌉	⌊		⌉	⌉	⌉
g	⅄	∧		∧	⌈	⌈
h	h			∨	⌊	⌊
i	ı	∫		•	⌈	•
j	ı	∧		1	⌋	⌋
k	⌒	⊂		⌒	⊂	⊂
l	⌣	∪		⌣	⌣	⌣
m	\	\		—	⊃	⊃
n	<	—		—	—	—
o	o	⊃		⊃	o	⌐
p	⌐	⌐		⌐σ	⌒	⌒
q	q	q		q	⊂	q⊂
r	r	r		r	r	r
s	ρ⊂	ı		⌈	/o	/o
t	⌈—	/		/	ı	ı
u	/	u		\	⌣	⌊
v	⊃	⌊		\	⌣	∧
w	⊃	∂		∂	∂	∧
x	∝	∞		⌒	x	x+
y	⌋	1		y	y	⊃
z	z	ı		z	/	/

Alexander sculpt.

·)· *I might:* ˙). *I must:* ˙(. *I could:* &c. With all the defects of this method, it does great credit to the ingenuity of the author; and may be adopted with success in systems, of which the alphabets are less objectionable.

In the year 1674, Elisha Coles, a School-master in Russel-street, Covent-garden, published a book, entitled "*The newest, plainest, and best, Short-hand extant.* Containing,—1st. A brief account of all the Short-hands already extant, with their alphabets, and fundamental rules. 2nd. A plaine and easie method for beginners, less burthensome to the memory than any other. 3rd. A new invention for contracting words, with special rules for contracting sentences, and other ingenious fancies, both pleasant and profitable unto all, let their character be whose or what it will." The third of these parts is the only one which requires particular mention. It may be observed however, that he has added many valuable modes of abbreviation to those of Mason, and displayed throughout his work great skill and ingenuity.

He makes a dot or tittle at a distance on the uppermost right-hand of a letter represent *of God:* two tittles in the same position, signify *of the Lord:* two such tittles in the nethermost corner, signify *of the world:* the repetition of any part of a sentence is denoted by a hyphen stroke, before or after; as, *Whatsoever things are true—honest—just—pure—lovely—of good report—&c.* When the repetition is *immediate,* it is denoted by a stroke *beneath* the line; as, *My father,* for My father, *my father!* *Jerusalem,* for Jerusalem, *Jerusalem.!* Sentences of an opposite meaning are denoted, as in Mason, by a bracket, thus): as *Rich*) for *Rich and Poor.* *The first shall be last,*) for *The first shall be last and the last first.* His most important suggestion relates to the formation of monosyllables. He observes, that every syllable should be answered by a single dash; and every word of one syllable by once setting the pen to paper. It follows, that the greatest difficulty lies in these, and that the shortest words are the chief obstacle to swift writing.. Variety of letters, he remarks,

may do something; variety of places more; and if both could be joined together, all monosyllables might be comprehended. The placing of a letter, a little higher or lower, takes up no more time than writing it in a direct line; for we always suppose a line, and he thinks it more convenient to have one drawn before-hand. According to this plan, the *b* stands for *ball* above the line, for *bell* when upon the line, and for *bull* under the line. It is probably to these hints (cursory as they are) that we are indebted for two or three systems of Stenography by position.

"*The Flying Pen-man: or, the Art of Short Writing, by a more easie, exact, compendious and speedy way.*" Composed by WILLIAM HOPKINS, is ornamented by a frontispiece representing a female writing, Mercury with his caduceus, and a group of angels holding a scroll on which is inscribed in Short-hand, "*Glory to the God of Heaven.*" Prefixed to the volume (which was printed in 18mo. in the year 1674) is a portrait of the author, and beneath him the following inscription:—

'See here his mild but serious visage darts
'The true proportion of his noble parts,
'Naturally rich and soe refined they are
'The Hand-maid with her Mistress may compare;
'Adding this Wonder more to knowing men
'The tongue for speed is matched by the pen.'

An address to the reader is succeeded by four copies of eulogistic verses in praise of the author, and by a small alphabetical Dictionary; the *first* column in each page containing the words as they are usually spelt; the *second* as they ought to be spelt in Short-hand; and, the *third*, the letters which are omitted:—as *abbot, abot, b.* The *first* chapter contains the alphabet:—the *second*, double consonants, formed of the simple alphabet, for the beginning and ends of words:—the *third* chapter elucidates the formation of the vowels; of which the place of *a* is at the top or beginning of the letter; the place of *e* even with the head of the letter; of *i* in the middle; of *o* even with the bottom or end; and of *u* at the bottom, or at the end;—the *fourth* chapter relates to the use of vowels, and he employs alphabetical vowels as well as dotted ones. In

every word, beginning with a vowel, the alphabetical *a* ∧; *e* *e*; &c., are expressed. His system of prepositions and terminations possesses neither elegance nor simplicity; and a sentence might be written with more rapidity without than with their employment. At the conclusion of the book there is a table of the words most frequently used in *Sermons;* partly formed and abbreviated from the alphabet, and partly arbitrary. This is succeeded by a table of scripture sentences, constructed by joining the initials or leading consonants of the words, as *rkg—ark of God:* *bkl—Book of the Lord.* The whole publication is *extremely* ingenious, but labours beneath the imperfection of an ill constructed alphabet. It is engraved with very considerable neatness for the age in which it was produced, and the ornamented borders of the pages might vie with the best efforts of the modern graver.

The most curious, however, and perhaps the most valuable Stenographic production of the 17th Century (especially to those who

do not object to the use of symbolical characters) was the production of a School-master at Bristol, named LAURENCE STEEL, who published in 1678, "*Short writing begun by Nature; Compleated by Art.*" This work (now extremely rare) is ornamented with an architectural title page. It is handsomely engraved, and presents in the neatness and distinctness of its execution, a striking and pleasing contrast to all preceeding systems. He observes, in his introduction to the plates, "That the common methods teach to write, first by letters and vowel places; a practice which he pronounces to be irregular; referring to the subsequent pages for decisive evidence—that if all words could be written by significant emblems, that way would be more pertinent and significant than any other way of writing. The common manner, he asserts, is prejudicial to the learner's progress, by disaffecting him at the first entrances with the longer way of writing, whereas he should have that to begin with which might take with his sense, and encourage him with alacrity to proceed." Of the

emblems he gives the following instances:— The character for *a* is ∧: then for *above* put a dot a little above *a* thus ∧: for *about* bring the bottom of *a about,* thus ⌒: in the same manner + is the character for *Christ,* and ⊕ is *Christ went about.* The character for *d* is ⌉ and therefore *divide* will be ⌉| for *d* is thus divided. The same expedient will represent *Christ divided* ⊕|: *Discover* is denoted by ⌒⌉ for thus *d* is *covered.* The character for *b* is ∩ and ⋂ is *belong* ; because it is now converted into *b long.* *Enter into* is represented by a stroke entering a circle ⊖: ⊜ is *even* and *heaven,* and ⊜⊖ is *enter into heaven.* The book consists of *three* parts; of which the emblems are the *first*: — the *second,* shows how words not expressible by emblems may be regularly and concisely written:—and the *third,* teaches a more effectual contraction of sentences in the same manner as of words. In this *third* part we are presented with a table of prefixes, or arbitrary characters, for *among, again, all, always, &c.* To these succeed the tenses and times, such as *do, dost,*

doth, did, didst, have, hath, &c., whether active or passive. For *not* he places a dot *within* or *upon* the mark of the tense, as in *I was not, I cannot, I must not, &c.* He unites the tenses with the particles, *it, that, such, there, this, those, thus, where, which, whether.* He uses dots in different positions for the interrogations and commands; as, D˙ *do they:* D· *do we:* D. *do thou:* D˙ *doth he:* D· *do I:* D. *do you: &c.* At the end of the system is an engraved specimen, accompanied by an explanation. The specimen is written within the circumference of a small circle; and the other part of the page contains a summary collection of unexplained characters for the exercise of the learner. This book is in every respect the most curious that can fall to the lot of a collector. The edition in my possession (which is the first) is stated in the title-page to be sold in Bristol, by the author; and, also by CHARLES ALLEN, Bookseller, in Broad Street, of the same City; and in London, by BENJAMIN CLARK, Stationer, in George Court, Lombard Street, and others. Printed in the year 1678.

"*Tacheographie: or, The Art of Writing as rapidly as one speaks,*" was published in Scotland, by Mr. Charles Ramsay, in 1681, and from the conciseness and distinction in the letters, which are exemplified in joining more than two-hundred double and triple consonants, and the characters for the prepositions and terminations, which he represents as inseparable from the art, seems to be the best system that had appeared in the world at that time, to which there have been great improvements since.

An improvement upon the system it elucidates, was attempted by Mr. Nathaniel Stringer, the author of "*Rich Redivivus; or Mr. Jeremiah Rich's Short-hand improved in a more brief and easy method then hath been set forth by any heretofore.*" It is preceeded by several copies of verses in the style of compliment almost peculiar to the 17th Century. Whether Mr. Stringer has succeeded in improving Mr. Rich's system, is a matter of no great consequence: certain it is that his method is far from being easy, legible, or expeditious. The

disciples of RICH appear, indeed, to be much more delighted with the contemplation of their own persons, and the embellishment of their own works, than solicitous to improve the Stenographic art: and though MR. STRINGER certainly displays as little knowledge of Engraving as his Friends of Poetry, yet he could not refrain from adopting a profusion of decorations, besides ornamenting his frontispiece with a portrait of Christ, and a preacher delivering the Ten Commandments, and prefixing his own portrait to his book, with this inscription:—

'Nature writes SHORT-HAND too, for here we find
'True CHARACTERS of an ingenious mind:
'In every Feature of this MODEST Face
'SYMBOLS of WITT and INDUSTRY we trace:
'Praise him we need not, since his Works doe showe
'How much unto his Match-lesse Pen we owe.'

MR. GEORGE RIDPATH, is the next who obliged the public with a treatise on Short-hand, which made its appearance in 1687, and was entitled "*Short-hand yet shorter, or the Art of Short Writing advanced in a more swift, easie, regular, and natural method than*

heretofore." The author informs us that by his new method, "the former difficulties in placing the vowels, are removed: they, the diphthongs and consonants, further contracted; the particles, pronouns, degrees of comparisons, persons, moodes, tenses, contrarities, repetitions, sentences negative and interrogatory are shortened. The rules are plain, easy to be remembered, and applied to any other Short-hand." These improvements, however, appear to exist only in the fancy of the author. He has neither removed the difficulties complained of, nor founded his system upon such simple and rational principles as entitles him to any claim of superiority.

About the year 1690, Mr. John West published "*A System of Short-hand, with plain and easy Directions for writing it.*" His system is founded upon Mr. Mason's "*Art's Advancement.*" He has made several alterations in the characters for the letters; but whether, by the transposition, the letters are easier in their junction, and more readily distinguished, than those of his author, can only be ascertained by a thorough knowledge of both.

	Coles. 1674.	Hopkins. 1674.	Steel. 1678.	Stringer. 16	Ridpath. 1687.	West. 1690.
a	<	∧	∧	⁄		⁄
b	⌒	⊥	⌒	⊥		∠
c	⊂	⊂	<⊥	⊂		⊂
d	⊃	⊃	⊃	⊃		⊃
e	e	e	ε	o		⁄
f	⊥	⊓	⊥	⊓		⊓
g	∧	⊔	⊔	⊔		⊓
h	o	ρ	o	h		⊥
i	.	ı.	ı	.		⁄
j	⊓	ı	ı	⊔		⁄
k	⊂	⌒	<	⌒		⊂
l	—	⌣	⊂	⌣		⌣
m	⊃	⊃	⊃	—		⊃
n	⁄	—	⁄	—		—
o	⌣	∠	⊂	∠		ρ
p	ρ	σ	⊂	σ		⌒
q	q	q	q	q		q
r	r	r	—	ρ		r
s	σ	⊓	ı	⊓		⁄o
t	ı	⁄	⁄	⁄		ı
u	.	.	.	⁄		⊔
v	v	v	v	⁄		⊔
w	⊂	⊥	⁄	⊥		σ
x	ℓ	ℓ	∞	⌒		x
y	γ	y	⊔	y		⁄
z	z	z	z	z		⁄

Alexander fc 250 Strand.

"*Thoographia; or a New Art of Short-hand: being a more natural, grammatical, and easie, method, than any yet extant,*" originally invented by ABRAHAM NICHOLAS, M. A. enlarged and published by THOMAS SLATER, and approved of by the ablest pen-men in London, licenced the 1st of April, 1692:—is chiefly remarkable for its frontispiece, part in Greek, and part in Latin; ornamented with heads and flourishes, engraved from his own writing. It contains also, an engraved Latin dedication to the ancient and flourishing University of Oxford; and to his not less celebrated *Alma mater*, the University of Cambridge. At the beginning of the book are two Latin conundrums; of which, the first neither deserves nor is susceptible of explanation: and the latter, councils the reader to correct his own errors before he attempts to correct the errors of the book. To the latter of these epigrams is signed the letters of the name, EDWARD HOOKER, transposed backwards.—The author and editor appear indeed to be enamoured, of their scholastic acquirements, for a Latin ode immediately precedes the

preface, written by one AINSWORTH, the author (it is presumed) of the Latin Dictionary; in which, this miserable production is welcomed with all the ardour, that the most valuable efforts of art and nature might have been expected to excite. A strong recommendation is also prefixed, from several persons of Hexham, who approve of the system as a very ingenious contrivance, much superior to any other tract of the kind. The first page announces the triumph of the editor in the simplicity and facility of the author's alphabet; though it has all the faults of his predecessors, and is probably as tedious as common writing. It is endeavoured to express the letters most frequently occurring, by characters similar in form, as ρ for *p*: q for *q*: ɾ for *r*: and σ for *s*. For such words as *soul*, he sounds the dipthong by taking off the pen and writing the next consonant from the vowel's place. His prepositions and terminations are arbitrary, and cannot all be distinguished from single words. In his contractions, he denotes the comparative degree by a long tittle. The monosyllable

man immediately following any primitive adjective, is denoted by a sidelong dash over the adjective. He adopts the use of characters placed in *three* positions—*above, below,* and in the *middle,* of the line, to indicate different words: and the book concludes with the specimen of a boy's writing, who was taught the system in a month.!

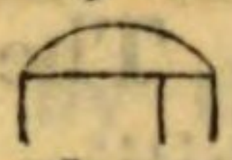
"*Stenographia; or, The Art of Short Writing compleated in a far more compendious method than any yet extant,*" by WILLIAM ADDY, was printed in 1695, and is more remarkable for the accuracy and elegance of its graphical execution, than for any considerable improvement of his professed original MR. RICH.—His principle rules are circumscribed by arches surmounting the lines, between which the examples are given; and in one or two instances, these arches are substituted by still more elegant embellishments, better executed than designed. In one of these—three children, or rather infants, are represented; one of them, on the right, is *making* his pen; the other in the middle, seated before an old-

fashioned desk, is *trying* his pen; and, the third, on the left, is *using* it. In the title page, are four naked boys surrounding a table, on which the title page is engraved, and they are employed in writing Short-hand. His portrait is painted by BARKER, and engraved by STURT. Beneath it, is the Latin inscription "*Vera Effigies* GULIELMI ADDY," and a fulsome and ridiculous eulogium in quaint Latin, of which the following is the purport:—"Let the aged and the young behold how much more splendidly the glory of Writing shines in him than in others. Nothing is perfected in the liberal pursuits at a single effort. Art assists Art. O! renowned ADDY! what thou teachest cannot be expressed. If any writer be equal to the delineation of thy merit, no more worthy or admirable picture has yet been presented to the world!"

At the end of MR. ADDY's production is a delineation of an angel soaring above the clouds, holding in the right-hand a circular body, on which the *Ten Commandments* are inscribed; and in the left a coronet, with a label beneath, on which is inscribed the Greek

word τίμη *Honor*: indicating the merits of his system, and the honorable nature of the art.

About the same time that Mr. Addy's publication made its appearance, Mr. Samuel Botley presented to the world "*Maximum in Minimo; or, Mr. Jeremiah Rich's Pen's Dexterity compleated, with the whole Terms of the Law.*" This performance resembles the work just mentioned, in the unimportance of its improvements, which are not always for the better; and is still more profuse in its embellishments. The title page contains the King's Arms between the Commandments and the Creed, and two supporters on each side of the title, who have the form of angels, and are waving laurel leaves. The authors of that period, indeed, like the authors of the present time, were neither ashamed to praise themselves, or to be praised by their friends. Mr. Addy inserts two copies of complimentary verses, remarkable only for their stupidity; and in the introduction to Mr. Botley's work, a kind and complimentary friend condoles and pities the poor unfortunate syllables, of

which so many are destroyed by the skill of Mr. Botley. In this production, the use of arches surmounting lines thus,  containing the directions *above* and the examples *below,* is correctly observed. He is the first who has adopted the language and imagery of Scripture, to the sanction and illustration of Short-hand; unless, we except the person who quoted from the 14th verse of the 5th chapter of Judges, "*Out of Zebulun came they that handle the pen of the writer.*" In order to elucidate the rapidity of Short-hand, and to recommend it to his religious readers, he places a variety of texts from Scripture at the top of his explanatory columns, and accompanies them by a plate expressive of the sentence. He quotes, for example, the 8th verse of the 1st chapter of Habakkuk, "*Thou shalt fly as an eagle,*" and the engraving represents an eagle on full wing. In the second of these compartments is the picture of a sedate and venerable man, supposed to be intended for David, from whose mouth proceeds a label containing the words "*My tongue is the Pen of a Ready-writer,*" and beneath "*His word*

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runneth very swiftly." These emblems are repeated in the second and third compartments. The fourth compartment contains an exhibition of two boys running, with a quotation "*Ye did run well.*" alluding to the rapidity of Short-hand. The sixth division is embellished by the representation of a hill, and a roe-buck, with the sentence from the 1st book of Chronicles, 12th chapter, and 8th verse, "*As swift as the Roes upon the mountains.*" These quotations are repeated in the other divisions, but with some variation of the pictures

Among the singular instances of absurd construction, and laborious inelegance, which characterize many of the old productions on Short-hand, is a work which appeared about the year 1700, entitled "*Short-hand unmask'd; or, an easy elegant Character, illustrated and explained in such a plain compendious manner, that a person of a moderate capacity may, by the Directions here given, alone readily attain it,*" by Henry Barmby. This production is couched in the form of question and answer between a learner and his teacher; and the

errors of preceding systems are adopted with the most pompous and ludicrous defence of their utility: *e* is represented by the loop: *f* by ⅂: *g* by ⅄: *h* by ⅂: *w* by ⅃: and, strange to say, *s* by ⅂ and Z. The principles of his system are adopted from Rich, and his examples have no superiority but in the elegance of the engraving. He is a warm admirer of arbitrary characters, and asserts, that they contribute so much to the readiness and beauty of the writing, that the trouble of learning them at first, bears no proportion to their advantages.

In the year 1712, Mr. Francis Tanner published a small treatise on Short-hand, containing forty-one pages in 12mo, and the title of it is—"*The plainest, easiest, and prettiest method of writing Short-hand ever yet published.*" The Author very justly observes that, as in Short-writing, the *Alphabet is fundamental to every thing else, much depends upon the choice of it*; and it ought to be composed of strokes the most simple that may be, naturally to join together, without coincidence.

His own, he conceived to be such: for the compiling of which, above thirty printed books of Short-hand were (he tells us) diligently perused and studied. But, it is not a little surprising, upon the inspection of it, to find his characters for *a*, *d*, and *t*, the same; his *b* and *h* also; and his *l* and *r* varying only a little in size: from whence we may naturally conclude that confusion and perplexity in the reading must ensue.

Mr. Samuel Lane, in his book, entitled "*The Art of Short-writing made lineal and legible as the common Long-hand,*" printed in 1716, proposes to express the vowels (even in the middle of words) sometimes by the characters, and sometimes by dots, in places assigned them, according to the usual method. He aims at some particularities indeed, but then they are unnecessary, and of no importance; as, for instance, when two vowels come together in the middle of a word, that only, says he, is to be written which is sounded. And when two vowels are necessary to be expressed at the end of a word, as in *Noah*, &c,

	Nicholas 1692.	Addy 1695.	Botley 16	Barmby 1700.	Tanner 1712.	Lane 1716.
a	.	/	/	/	/	/
b						
c						
d						
e						
f						
g						
h						
i						
j						
k						
l						
m						
n						
o						
p						
q						
r						
s						
t						
u						
v						
w						
x						
y						
z						

Alexander fe qui stavit.

you should make a large dot for the first mentioned vowel, and for the other, a small one, in their respective places. But I cannot perceive this to be any material improvement; and there is no doubt but many prior systems were preferable to his.

In 1717 appeared an anonymous publication, entitled "*A new method of Short and Swift Writing; being the plainest, easiest, shortest, and quickest way of writing ever yet published.*" The fourth edition of this work is embellished with a copper-plate engraving, and was printed at London in 8vo, by H. Parker.

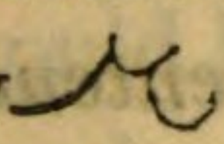
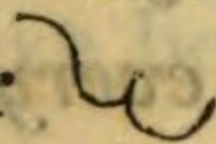
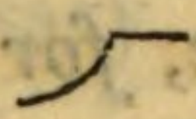
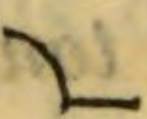
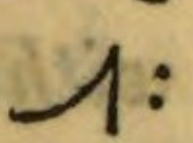
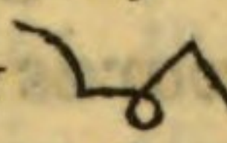
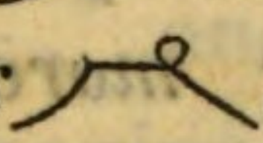
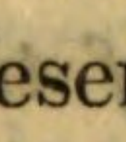
In 1727 James Weston published "*Stenography compleated: or the Art of Short-hand brought to perfection; being the most easy, exact, lineal, speedy and legible method extant.*" A handsome portrait is prefixed to the work, which is neatly printed in a portly volume, and illustrated by plates very neatly executed. In these embellishments, all the superiority of his work consists; and a single glance at his alphabet will prove its insufficiency. Like

many other useless and prolix treatises, it contains the signatures of recommendation of many persons of rank and learning, who speak of its merits in terms of extravagant eulogy. His signs for the moods and tenses occupy as much space, and are as difficult to be formed, as the words in full, when written by a common alphabet; and are so multifarious and so unconnected by any regular system, as to distract the attention and burthen the memory: (for instance) is *am*; *art*; *would*; &c. is *wish*; is *I wish*; and *I pray God*. He abounds to an unexampled degree in arbitrary characters; his explanations are brief, obscure, and unsatisfactory; and the characters are unsightly and liable to be mistaken for each other. His chief peculiarity consists in the joining rules: He connects the substantive with the adjective. If the adjective ends with a vowel, as *dry*, he places that vowel after the substantive, but prefixes the adjective. Of all the absurdities, prolixities, and frivolities, which the unhappy student of Short-hand is compelled to endure in his perusal of the earlier writers,

nothing can equal the abbreviating rules of Mr. James Weston. He appears, however, to have contributed in one respect to the simplicity of the art, by employing the dot as the sign of a termination. His work is divided into two parts; the second of which is adorned by a frontispiece, representing a court of justice, beneath which are the following lines:—

> 'By this swift Art, the Student of the Laws
> 'May write in little the whole pleaded Cause.'

This second part is entitled "*A Dictionary, or an Alphabetical Table, containing almost all the words in the English tongue, with the Short-hand over against each word; so that no person can mistake or be in the least doubt how to write or read this new method.*" This alphabet of shortened words exhibits a miserable picture of the author's mind, and of the state of the art at this period. *Abandon* is written thus, ⊤⊇ ; so that the writer is obliged to take off his pen at the end of the characters ⊇ and make the additional stroke l, thus ⊤⊇; which is the case with many other words, as ⊤ *abate*; ⊤ *abase*: ⊤⊃ *absolve*;

which, even when written in this arbitrary manner, require a longer exercise of the pen, than the same words when spelt according to the regular order of modern alphabets. Even in the system of BYROM, which will be shortly noticed, and which possesses every excellence but brevity, the words that have been just quoted, expressed in full, and according to determinate rules, are shorter than in the Dictionary of MR. WESTON.—*Abandon,* according to BYROM, spelt with all its consonants, scientifically formed, and immediately remembered, would be represented by  or  : *abase,* by  or  : *abate,* by  : *absolve,* by  or  . *Ail,* or *ale,* is represented by  which requires three times the labour of spelling it in its usual form. The great imperfection of WESTON'S Short-hand, however, consists in the similarity of the arbitrary characters, which are only distinguished from each other by deviations too abstruse for common apprehension, or for the most retentive memories; and by the uncouth and difficult modes of junction which he has adopted. To consult a work of this

kind, and to learn a system so constructed, is more tedious and laborious than the study of the Greek language, without the possibility of arriving at perfection: and, there is no doubt that an unitiated scholar would sooner accomplish the knowledge of THUCYDIDES, than the art of Short-hand as taught by MR. WESTON.

The same author published in 1745 "*A New Short-hand Grammar, containing a general rule for writing any language, whether English, Latin, French, &c.: also, particular shortening and joining rules, fitted to the English tongue, for joining in every sentence, five, six, or more words together, without taking off the pen, in an instant of time.*"—In a dedication, addressed to the RIGHT HONORABLE WILLIAM HOWARD, LORD VISCOUNT ANDOVER, Member of Parliament for the Borough of Castle-rising in the County of Norfolk, he congratulates his Lordship on his proficiency in his former system of Short-hand, and implores his protection to the Short-hand Grammar. The same volume includes "Directions for writing Short-hand, containing

a general rule whereby any person may write foreign languages, &c., if they can but read them. In short, whatever can be written in the common Round-hand may be also written in Short-hand by this general rule, together with some particular shortening and joining rules." These "Directions" are founded on the same principles (somewhat simplified) with his previous publications, and are ornamented with the same frontispiece as his Dictionary. His shortening rules present a curious contrast to his alphabet; for had the latter been a good one, the former would have been unnecessary. His character for *b*, for example, is < and he gravely recommends that in the beginning or middle of words the vowel should be omitted, whereas had his alphabet been constructed on simple and rational principles; had / for instance represented *b*, and \ *e*, the two letters might have been expressed in the same compass as the *b* itself, according to his plan. In repeating the consonants, as *did*, he does not double them thus ʒ but makes them twice as large thus) He throws away the sign of the adverb *ly*,

and instead of *meekly* writes *meek:* instead of *legality* he writes *legal,* throwing away *ity,* the sign of the substantive, and so on in similar instances. His remaining rules for shortening exhibit a degree of ingenuity strikingly contrasted with the general absurdities of his system, and should be carefully studied by every cultivator of Stenography; and had his alphabet been accommodated to the modes of contraction he there displays, he would have deserved a very high degree of praise and admiration. Indeed, the efforts of the author's genius to accomplish so much, on so miserable a superstructure, must have been as unremitting as they were successful; and demonstrate how much his faculties must have been improved by age, and his acquaintance with the art, matured by experience. In the same volume is contained "Observations and explications proper for better understanding the letters of the alphabet, double and triple consonants, prepositions, terminations, &c." It is a mere recapitulation of his former works, and like them is embellished with a neatly executed engraving. So that the whole series of his plates are addressed respectively

to the *Bar*, the *Senate*, and the *Church*; and exhibit views of the interior of the Courts of Justice, the House of Parliament, and the Temple of God. I have already quoted the motto to the first of these plates. To the second of them, representing a picture of the House of Lords, the King seated on his throne, he affixes these lines:—

> 'This curious Art will teach you to take down
> 'The great affairs of Government and Crown.'

To the third plate, exhibiting a view of the interior of a Cathedral, he adds:—

> 'Be perfect in this useful Art and then,
> 'No word from Pulpit can escape your Pen.'

In 1736, the Rev. Philip Gibbs committed to the world "*An Historical Account of Compendious and Swift Writing*," which displays extensive reading, impartial judgment, and much knowledge of the theory of the art.—The second part of this work is entitled "*An Essay towards a farther Improvement of Short-hand.*" His system is singularly obscure and confused. As if the difficulties of forming a regular and expeditious alphabet

had not been already sufficiently numerous, he has adopted both angular and looped characters for many of the consonants, to be used according to the length or shortness of the succeeding syllable, and it is therefore extremely slow and complex. He represents *b* by ⅊ and ⅊ : *f* by ⅂ and ⅂ : and *l* by ∪ and ∨ . His rules of abbreviation are similar, with a few unimportant variations, to those of his predecessors. He introduces at the end of his work, a list of symbolical marks, apparently copied from WILLIS and WESTON. *o* with a dot over it, *ȯ* stands for *above*: *l* with a dot over it ∪̇ for *above all*, &c. *ii* represents *eye to eye*: and ·♡· *out of the heart*. He seems to have been better acquainted with the Greek and Roman classics, than with the practical part of the art he professed to teach.

In the year 1747 AULAY MACAULAY published his "*Polygraphy, or Short-hand made easy to the meanest capacity; being an universal character fitted to all languages.*" The third edition is embellished by a frontispiece, representing the interior of a church or chapel.

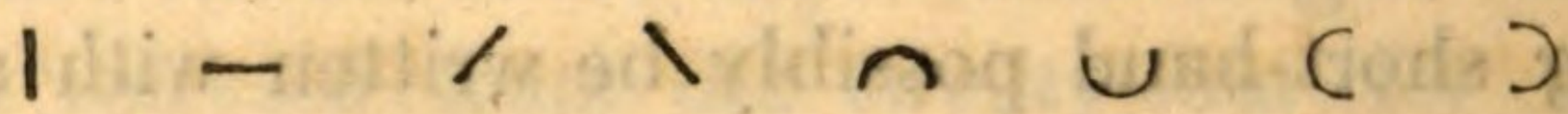
A plate also is given of the armorial bearings of GEORGE PRINCE OF WALES, to whom the work is presented in an engraved dedication. It is but justice to an able and much injured individual to state, that this system is a gross and flagrant plagiarism from the manuscript of DR. JOHN BYROM, whose system will be almost immediately noticed. DR. BYROM had completed his system, formed on the union of loops with lines, and with segments of the circle, so early as 1720, and in 1727 he obtained an act of parliament for the security of his invention. As his chief support, however, depended on private tuition, he was unwilling to commit his system to the press; and, when he was at length persuaded so to do, he only printed off in 1749, *fifty copies*, for the use of his private and favorite pupils. In the mean time, however, the rival Stenographers of the day, clandestinely obtained the outlines and the general principles of his alphabet: and MACAULAY'S characters only differ from BYROM'S by having the loop at the *end* instead of the *beginning* of a letter. In the looped characters this is an obvious dis-

advantage, for ⌒ is easier formed than ⌒ as it requires the utmost exertion and considerable time to stop the pen at the end of the latter character. With all the faults of BYROM, he has none of his excellencies. The former was content with uniting loops to straight lines, or regular curves, as ⌒ but MACAULAY unites the loops and irregular curves, as ⌒ &c. With a singular degree of absurdity; he employs the same characters for his *long* short-hand and *short* short-hand; in the former of which all the vowels are used, though the characters for the eighteen consonants in the *short* short-hand might have been selected from the twenty-four for the *long* short-hand. It would have appeared to any man of common capacity, that to make two characters of the slant and straight stroke, as they were brought *downwards* or carried *upwards* thus //, was a much more simple and eligible mode of operation than to adopt that principle with the curve lines thus, ⌒ yet the latter of these modes is exclusively adopted by MR. MACAULAY, and renders his system, independently of other errors and absurdities,

slow, incorrect, and unintelligible. Certificates of excellence, are, of all testimonies, the most suspicious; they have accompanied almost every system, good or bad, slow or rapid, legible or illegible, that has appeared since the invention of Short-hand. Mr. Macaulay, however, produces the certificate of several attorneys at law, linen-drapers and warehousemen, testifying, that a little boy aged seven years, had written and read the system distinctly. This circumstance is extremely possible; for in his *long* short-hand every word is spelt in full; and they say nothing of the rapidity with which he wrote it. Could the *long* short-hand possibly be written with any approach to the rapidity of public speaking, the exertions of Mr. Macaulay would deserve applause: but the omission of the vowels, for all practical purposes, is indispensible; and the *short* short-hand of Mr. Macaulay, omitting the vowels is barbarous, obscure, incorrect, and useless.

In the year 1748, Mr. Jeake published in the 487th number of the Philosophical

Transactions.—" *An Essay on Short-hand.* " The author begins by stating, that a succession of new Short-hands, published without the reason of their construction, having put him on forming a method founded on nature, the only guide to perfection, he settled his alphabet by enumerating from a promiscuous selection of a thousand letters, the number of times each letter was repeated in the thousand: and that after having made this table, he considered with himself, that there are in nature no more than eight simple characters; four whereof are *right*, and the other four are *crooked* lines; as



He judiciously observes that all characters, whatever, must be made up of these; and he is of opinion their composition tends to introduce ambiguity of signification, and that from thence arises a difficulty in reading a Short-hand which uses the simple characters for some letters, and compound characters for other letters; or, which is as bad, for words. This difficulty, he informs us, being unavoidable in a Short-hand of more than eight letters, (making it appear that eight was the

number of letters a Short-hand ought not to exceed) he considered that if *a, e, i, o,* and the aspirate *h,* was suppressed, there would be nineteen letters only remaining to be expressed by eight marks, which he arranged and represented in the following manner:—

dt	*lr*	*mn*	*uw*	*csxz*	*bfp*	*cgkq*	*y*
/	—	\	|	(	)	∩	∪

The ranging of the letters into classes, as represented above, will neither (he asserts) introduce a greater ambiguity than all Short-hands are subject to, nor render his method more puzzling to a reader than any of the rest. According to this system, the *Lord's prayer,* being expressed in letters of the common alphabet, would be written thus:—

" *Ur ftr wc rt n vn, llwd b ty nm, ty kndm cm, ty wll b dn n rt s t s n vn, gv s ts dy ur dly brd, nd frgv s ur dts, s w frgv ur dtrs, nd ld s nt nt tmpttn, bt dlvr s frm vl, fr tn s t kndm, t pwr, nd t glry, fr vr nd vr, mn.* "

The advantages of this Short-hand in the state exhibited, when perfectly learned, so as to be readily written, will appear from the author's own statement, nearly as follows:—

1. That by the suppression of *a, e, i, o, h,* or $\frac{400}{1000}$, only $\frac{6}{10}$ of the time of writing ordinary Long-hand is necessary to write this.

2. That the simple strokes representing the consonants, not taking up above half the time of writing the consonants, only half of $\frac{6}{10}$, or $\frac{3}{10}$ of the time of any thing wrote in Long-hand, is necessary for writing this.

3. Right lines not taking up more than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the time of expressing the crooked lines, as the diameter is $\frac{2}{3}$ of the semiperiphery, it appears, if only right lines were used, these $\frac{3}{10}$ would be reduced to $\frac{2}{10}$, by the subtraction of $\frac{1}{3}$ of $\frac{3}{10}$. But, because the number of right lines, all things considered, should not be reckoned more than double the number of crooked ones, only $\frac{2}{3}$ of $\frac{1}{10}$ can be taken from the $\frac{3}{10}$, that is to say, the time taken up in writing this hand will be $\frac{9}{30}$ $\frac{2}{30}$ $\frac{7}{30}$ of the time taken in writing the common Long-hand, or less than the $\frac{1}{4}$ of the time.

Granting, however, the learned and ingenious author's performance every possible perfection he has *specified;* yet, as the words are separately written, and *all construction* utterly lost, it cannot therefore be said to

be *preferable,* or even *equal* to any one of the methods now publicly written.

Had this gentleman kept a watchful eye upon the genius of the Hebrew grammar, it would have taught him the absurdity and impossibility of *rightly* forming a language of only *eight letters,* or rather the two *primary characters* of nature, each put in its four opposite positions. Besides, notwithstanding all that can be said, writing by *any* number of *consonants* is wholly *arbitrary,* and produces perpetual *ambiguity.* In one word, simple nature is much cramped throughout his whole scheme, which, all things duly considered, can be nothing more than an ingenious *whim.*

In 1750, a treatise appeared from the pen of William Tiffin, entitled "*A new help and improvement of the Art of Swift-writing: being an alphabet not only contrived to be convenient for that purpose, but correspondent also in its elements, especially the consonants, to the several articulations and utterances, that compose the English Language.*" The whole system depends upon the position of

the characters, *above, below,* or *upon* the line; and as it is impossible that any two characters should be joined but such as belong to the same line, and immediately follow each other; the system, as far as can be understood from his own obscure and imperfect explanation, is utterly destitute of the first great requisite of Stenography—*brevity and rapidity.*

About the year 1750, was published a new system, entitled "*Annet's Short-Hand, more easy to learn and remember than any other, and may be as expeditiously wrote. By this new method every word is to be written without taking off the pen; and as many words joined together as may be lineal and legible.*" To a subsequent edition of this production is prefixed a portrait of the author, in which he is described as seventy-five years of age in the year 1768, and beneath the portrait are these encomiastic lines:—

'The face is seen, but what the head contains,
'The work, that mirror of the mind, explains.'

His alphabet includes characters for the vowels, and is so constructed as to subject the

	Weston 1727	Weston 1745	Gibbs 1736	Macaulay 1747	Peake 1748	Tiffin 1750
a	^	^	C	-ı		⌣
b	<	<	pq	⌒	⌒	ı
c	C	C		c	C	⌒C
d	⌒	⌒	⌒>	⧵	/	/
e	ϑ	ϑ	o	o		–
f	L	L	⅂/	⌒	⌒	C
g	ɥ	ɥ	⌐	⌣	⌒	⌒
h	h	h	⅂	—		.
i	1	1	1	—		ı.
j	1	1	1⌣	—	⌒	.
k	⌒	⌒	⌒^	⌒	⌒	⌒
l	⌣	⌣	⌣v	ı	—	⌣
m	⧵	⧵	⧵⧵	⧵	⧵	—
n	—	—	—	/	⧵	—
o	e	e	⌐	⌒⌣		⌒
p	ρσ	ρσ	σe	⌐	⌒	ı
q	⅂	⅂	q	⌣	⌒	⌒⧵
r	r	r	r1	⌒	—	⌒
s	ıq	ıq	ı⅂	/	C	C
t	/	/	/	ı	/	/
u	v	v	qe	⌒⌣	ı	⧵
v	v	v		⧵	⌒	⧵
w	7	7	ɣℓ	/	ı	⧵
x	∞	∞	x	ʃ	C	X
y	ɣ	ɣ	y	⌣	⌣	.ı
z	z	z	z	ϑ	C	~

Alexander, sc 230 Strand.

reader and writer to continual confusion and perplexity. ∠ represents *f*, and of course occupies nearly as much time in its formation as a common *f*. *s* is represented by J struck upwards, which it is almost impossible to perform with facility; and the *m* and *n* ⌒ ⌒ are only distinguished from each other by a difference in size. The same is the case with the *g* and *u* ◡ ◡: the *d* and *t* | |: the *p* and *b* // : the *h* and *w* - — : and the *r* and *x*)) He recommends the learner to write every word in full, where precision is necessary; asserting, that to take off the pen and make a dot or tittle, requires more time than the use of the vowel character. It is the fault, however, of this and every other system in which the consonants are sacrificed to the introduction of vowel characters, that the former, on which the facility of Short-hand chiefly depends, are necessarily formed of illegible and complex characters, the simple ones being selected for the vowels. The other parts of Mr. Peter Annet's Short-hand deserve no particular notice. It is, in fact, a summary, rather than a system, and can

only contribute to the use and pleasure of those who wish to attain, at a trifling expence of time, a *secret alphabet,* in which they can write their memorandums.

The success of Mr. Thomas Gurney's system published in 1753, under the title of "*Brachygraphy, or Short-writing made easy to the meanest capacity,*" presents a striking example that popularity is too often in the inverse ratio of desert; and, that the assiduous student of a bad system, will far outstrip the negligent pupil of a skilful master. Mr. Gurney's system was not only received by the public with the warmest approbation, but has been practised in the courts of law with long and uniform success, by the members of his family. Yet no one can examine his system without at once admiring and pitying the exertion that must have been necessary to their attainment of its practice. His alphabet and rules are founded on those of Mason: and the former and the latter are equally complex. His *b* requires two movements ⅂: his *e* the same ✓: his *h* ∟, cannot be distinguished from

the junction of his *t* and *n* |_ : and his *w* ∧ is liable to be mistaken, independent of its slowness, for his *s* and *d* /\. He adopts the worst of all possible methods of denoting the vowels place, by taking off the pen and placing the next consonant in a particular position; as |ᵕ *tal, tel;* |ᴗ *til, tyl;* |ᴗ *tol, tul;* &c. His rules of abbreviation are compiled without much judgment or sagacity, from previous writers, and demonstrate no claim to that patronage which has been as extensive as undeserved.

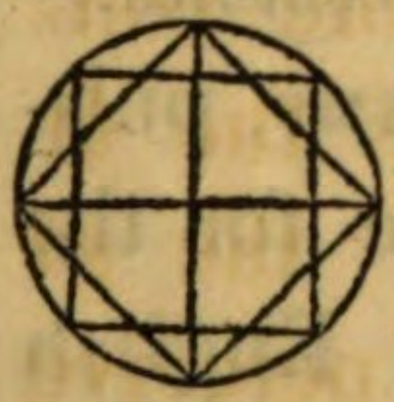
In 1758 appeared "*Stenography, or Shorthand Improved; being the most compendious, lineal, and easy method hitherto extant,*" by John Angell. It contains a very superficial, inaccurate, and prejudiced review of all preceding systems. It is remarkable that one of the subscribers was Mr. J. afterwards the celebrated Dr. Johnson. He retains two *s's*, ⁄o of which the first represents that letter in any situation, and the second represents *s* when joined to other consonants. In this particular, as in some other instances, he is

a mere imitator of GURNEY. His great claim to praise would have consisted (had not BYROM preceded him) in placing the dots for vowels. He differs, however, from BYROM in placing the dot for *a* and *e* opposite the top; for *i* and *y* opposite the middle; *o* and *u* at the bottom: as l¨ *ta, te;* l·· *ti, ty;* l.. *to, tu.* Though this system is complex in its alphabet, and must be learned with considerable difficulty, yet he has adopted from BYROM so many useful hints, and has arranged it with so much ingenuity that it can be written with twice the facility of any of the preceding published systems, and infinitely more rapidly than that of his immediate predecessor MR. GURNEY.

In 1760, HENRY TAPLIN of Chichester, Sussex, published his "*Short-hand adapted to the meanest capacity; wherein the rules are few, plain and easy; and the Characters not burthensome to the memory.*" His system is extremely superficial and imperfect. His *a* and *e*; *b* and *v*; *f* and *p*; are only distinguished from each other singly by difference

in size. The *b* and *v*, indeed, are fine strokes upwards, and have the same shape with the *p* and *f*, which are strong strokes downwards; an invention which materially contributes to the formation of a perfect alphabet. *d* and *t* are drawn downwards, *t* being half *d*; an arrangement that must be productive of continual confusion. The same error is observable in making *k* half *g*. Whoever compares the list of double consonants when joined, and contrasts the *br* with the *vr*; the *vn* with the *bn*; the *gl* with the *kl*, &c., will immediately perceive that it is impossible for any one, who does not devote his whole life to the task, to write from such an alphabet without perpetual confusion. Mr. Taplin has recourse, like Mr. Gurney, to the most awkward and unscientific expedient employed by the oldest masters of Short-hand. *a* in the middle of a word, for example, is understood by setting off the letter following the *a* higher than the middle of the letter preceding it, as ⌒ *man*; ⌐ *bad*. A most miserable and imperfect contrivance!

In 1760, Mr. Thomas Stackhouse published his "*Art of Short-hand on a new plan adapted to the English Language,*" with the motto—Vox Audita perit, litera scripta manet.—*What is spoken vanishes from remembrance, what is written alone remains.*—He seems to have entertained very correct and rational views of the principles of this art; and in imitation of Byrom, takes his lines and curves from the diameters, the chords, and the



segments of a circle. But unfortunately, besides admitting the judicious principle of distinguishing one letter from another by its change of direction, he admits also a variety of length; and his *n* and *f* — —; his *s* and *st* // are liable to be continually mistaken for each other. His *ck* and *lk* ⊂⊂ can scarcely be distinguished, and his *l* and *lf* ⌒⌒ are in the same predicament. It is not to the adoption of this principle that I object, but to the indiscreet extreme to which it has been carried. There can be no doubt that an alphabet judiciously aided by variations of length, as in the letters *f* and *v* \\ might

be rendered much more perfect than any which has yet appeared, without being liable, on the score of legibility, to greater objections than the omission of the dot for an *i* in common writing, when accompanied by an *l*, as *ıl lı* for *il li*.

"*Cryptography; or a new, easy and compendious system of Short-hand, adapted to all the various Arts, Sciences, and Professions.*" by Mr. James Swaine and Joseph Simms, published in 1761, is chiefly remarkable for the cuts of the Solar system, and the English grammar which are appended to the work. Their alphabet resembles that of Angell, and their mode of placing the vowel points is by the position of the dots in *three* places. In their prepositions and terminations there is nothing worthy of particular remark.

In 1762, appeared "*The art of Short-hand improved, being an universal character adapted to the English Language, whereby every kind of subject may be expressed, or taken down in a very easy, compendious, and legible*

	Annet 1750.	Gurney 1753.	Angell 1758.	Taplin 1760.	Stackh.se 1760.	Swaine 1761.
a						
b						
c						
d						
e						
f						
g						
h						
i						
j						
k						
l						
m						
n						
o						
p						
q						
r						
s						
t						
u						
v						
w						
x						
y						
z						

Alexander & Son Sculpt.

manner," by DAVID LYLE, A. M. In a very judicious preface he reviews the systems of WESTON, MACAULAY and ANNET, and points out the requisites which are necessary to the formation of a perfect system of Short-hand. He observes — 1. That the most simple characters possible ought to be found out and their conveniency of writing and joining considered, in order to signify all the principal simple sounds and their modifications, and as many compound ones as can be done in a convenient and short manner.

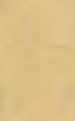
2. An enquiry must be made into the English Language with a view to find out and state in order all the principal sounds and modifications of sound, together with their letters.

3. The characters which are most easily wrote and joined must be assumed to signify the letters, or the sounds most frequently used, the more unusual sounds being represented by the more complex characters. He found, he said, that a point could be varied in no other way than by position and number, and he therefore concluded that it might serve to

signify particles or other circumstances of names. Again he found that a straight line could be varied four ways in direction, with regard to the line of writing, and each of these he could vary two ways in length, in the same manner as in Long-hand. These, he observes, made up eight simple characters. It is singular, however, that he should have forgotten the variation produced by the point from which the letter is written, as ⁄ ⁄. After arranging his straight lines, he proceeds to dissect the circle and the ellipsis, and finds that he has obtained altogether fifty-six characters. He represents the vowels in a manner too ambiguous and difficult for swift writing, by different forms and inclinations (if it may be so expressed) of the circle. The broad *a* is denoted by ⌒ : *o* or *u* short by ⌒ : *o* long by σ : *u* long by σ : and abounds in such characters as ∪∩, which are always liable to be mistaken for the combinations of other letters, as ∪∩ : &c. His variations of the circle and ellipsis for compound consonants require as much pains in their formation as to join the simple consonants, and

are liable to be incorrectly joined and represented. His tables of words have a very imposing and ornamental appearance from their neatness and apparent brevity; but on examining the sentences, the reader discovers that their shortness is produced, in the greater number of them, by leaving out words and syllables necessary to the sense; as *lsv.* for *lascivious*: *lbr.* for *library*, &c. &c. This system is concluded by a series of arbitrary characters for terms of art, phrases in law and divinity, and names of substances. Mr. Lyle appears to have been an ingenious man, and the student may peruse his system with advantage; but its merits are merely theoretical, as it is impossible that any one can apply the principles of his work to any purpose of convenience.

Among the most simple, skilful, and curious productions of the Stenographic art, is an anonymous publication entitled "*The Alphabet of Reason: being an Essay towards constructing a plan to facilitate the art of Swift-writing, commonly called Short-hand,*

upon rational principles." To this Essay is prefixed a plate of the principal alphabets up to the appearance of that of SWAINE and SIMMS; and one of the columns contains a curiosity which is not to be seen in any other collection, a copy of the alphabet proposed by MR. JEAKE; the absurdity and obscurity, however, of MR. JEAKE'S system, is observable on the slightest examination: its effect would be to represent the words *piled* and *bright* by the same letters, thus *gone* would be mistaken for *come,* as  and *Henry the third* for *Mary the cook.* The author of "*The Alphabet of Reason*" (written four years before the publication of BYROM'S system) observes, in his prefatory observations, that the failure of the respective trials for constructing a more useful and simple alphabet, will not appear strange, when it is considered that the authors of them have arbitrarily obtruded methods on the public, unsupported by philosophical principles; trivial or no reasons being given for the establishment of their particular characters; nor why their rules are frequently violated

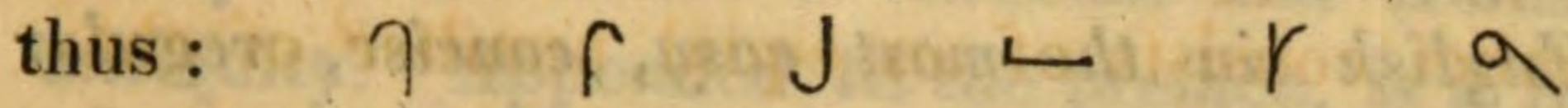
as arbitrarily as they are appointed. He, himself, after calculating the proportions of the letters in 1616 words from "*The Rambler,*" arranges his alphabet in such a manner as to allot the simplest characters to the consonants most frequently occurring, as — *t* | *s* / *n* \ *h* ⌒ *r* ⌣ *v* ⊃ *l* (*k* proceeding to denote the other characters by compound curves ⌣ ⌐ ⌉ ⌠ &c. reserving the most difficult, as ⌒ (&c, for the vowels. It is to be regretted that he should have formed these latter curves irregular, requiring two motions; as, had he had recourse, like Byrom, to the division of the circle into segments, the systems, except in the exclusion of the loop, would have been extremely similar: the *f* ⌐ *m* ⌣ *p* ⌣ and *d* ⌐ for example, very nearly approach the two *b's* ⌣ and two *th's* ⌒ of the latter. I have not seen any System more easy, elegant and simple than this, considering the early period at which it was invented; and it has been of evident and essential service to the labours of later Stenographers.

I have now in my possession, an original copy of a system published in 1764, by MARK-ANTHONY MEILAN, entitled "*Stenography: or Short-hand improved, being a new epitome of the art; in which the difficulties that occur from every former writer on the subject are entirely removed, and its principles rendered easy and familiar to the meanest capacities.*" The alphabet, and the rest of the Short-hand characters, except one page, are not engraved, but filled up with a pen. His system is chiefly founded on that of GURNEY, with the substitution of a much more simple and elegant alphabet. The ⌒ *b*, however, and the ⌒ *f*, resemble each other too much to be employed in quick writing, and the *r* is exactly similar to that of the common Running-hand.

In the year 1765, ANTHONY CLAYTON published a treatise, which he informs us in the title is "*An improvement on* MR. WESTON'S *excellent new method of Short-hand.*" The voluminous appearance which MR. CLAYTON'S book makes, is an indication of the per-

plexity of the system. The improvement he proposes appears exceedingly prolix: his alphabet consists of an equal number of characters as there are letters in the common one: his rules are numerous: the arbitrary and symbolical characters much more so: many of the rules are trifling; and others of little importance to the purposes of expedition. To acquire a proper knowledge of this system, so as to make it in any degree useful, must require much more attention, than most persons have either inclination or time to bestow.

Mr. Edward Hodgson succeeded Mr. Clayton, and published a manual entitled "*Swift-writing, commonly called Short-hand, on an improved plan, the result of long practice.*" This book made its appearance in 1766, and contains a brief review of some of his predecessors in the art, up to that period; an engraved alphabet, and a table of arbitrary characters. There is nothing peculiar in his system of abbreviation, and his alphabet is formed on the model of that of Gurney.

His *b* is hooked, and six of his other characters are formed by two movements, thus: 

In 1780, Mr. Hodgson presented to the world another publication, entitled "*Short-hand Contractions, adapted to every system of Short-hand.*" This book is chiefly remarkable for an engraved table of the alphabets, and an account of the Short-hand books from the time of Willis to the appearance of the *first* system of his immediate predecessor, Mr. Blanchard. Besides the letters of the alphabet, shortening rules, &c., there are an immense number of symbolical characters, whereby the words and sentences annexed to them are understood; these have no connection with the alphabet, and must be well fixed on the memory of the learner, if he means to be a complete master of the system.—Nothing, however, but an uncommon desire of acquiring Short-hand, could induce any person to engage in an undertaking so very burthensome to the memory, and abounding with so much confusion, uncertainty, and irregularity.

In 1767, was published "*The Universal English Short-hand; or the way of writing English in the most easy, concise, regular and beautiful manner, applicable to any other language, but particularly adjusted to our own.*" Invented by JOHN BYROM, M. A. F. R. S. and sometime Fellow of *Trinity College, Cambridge,* now published from his manuscripts.—Manchester, printed by JOSEPH HARROP.—The publication of this work forms a new æra in the history of Short-hand; for though MACAULAY and other teachers of Stenography had obtained, from their acknowledged acquaintance with BYROM's unpublished system, many useful hints, it was not till the circulation of this book had improved the national taste, and corrected the erroneous ideas which had been generally formed respecting the principles of the art, that Short-hand assumed the precision, the elegance, and the systematic construction of which it is susceptible. The editor informs us in his preface, that MR. BYROM had been employed for some time previous to his death on a literary history of Short-hand, in which he

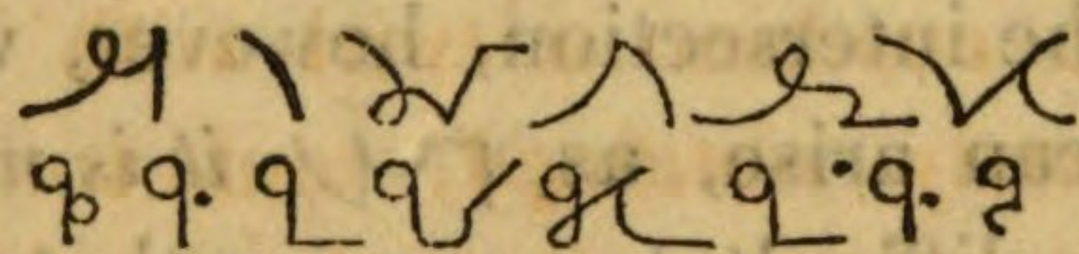
had intended to shew its estimation and utility in the times of Grecian and Roman antiquity. Appended to the preface, is a list of Mr. Byrom's Scholars, many of them of the first rank in the Church, the Law, and the State. After descanting on the absurdity of introducing into a treatise on Short-hand arbitrary and symbolical characters, he proceeds to explain the general outlines of his system. He expresses the vowels by dots in *five* positions. He observes, that no character ought to exceed the limits of two parallel lines, within which the writing should run horizontally along, without being crouded. In order to assist the memory of the learner, he classes the letters in the following manner, according to their affinity of sound, or their labial connection:—

p, b, f, v. *t, d, th, dh.*
s, z, sh, zh. *h, g, ch, j.* *m, n, l, r, h.*

He then proceeds to the formation of his alphabet. He appropriates distinct marks to *q, x, w,* and *y,* when they are initial letters, not scrupling, however, in other situations to denote those letters by *k, ks, oo* and *i*

respectively. Having adopted for his *s*, *t*, *r*, and *f*, a straight line in different directions; he takes for his next most important letters the segments of a circle ◯ ◯ which stand for *m*, *n*, *d*, *p*; and as he is particularly attentive to the beauty of the writing, he appropriates, for the convenience of joining, both ⌒ and ⌒ to *b*, and ⌒ to *th*. Having exhausted all his simple lines, he proceeds to combine a twirl with the characters already obtained, and to facilitate their junction directs it to be made in particular letters, by more than one direction. His *l*, for instance, when joined to his *s*, may be formed in this manner, ⌒ ⌒ or ⌒ . After his alphabet is once studied and completed, it is impossible not to admire the precision, elegance, and ingenuity, by which it is distinguished: but, unfortunately, with all its merits, it is better calculated as preparatory to instruction in a better system, or, for the use of the private student, than for practical utility. It wants the first great requisite of Shorthand, *rapidity!* for though the skill, neatness

and legibility of his modes of joining and of abbreviation, in a great degree, supply the deficiencies of his alphabet, the continual recurrence of the loop retards the progress of the pen, to a degree which only those who have tried the experiment can conceive. In the following sentence, for instance, the use of the twirl renders the task of copying almost as tedious as in common writing—



'Begot by Butchers but by Bishops bred,
'How high his honor holds his haughty head.'

After finishing his alphabet, he proceeds to speak of particles, prepositions, and terminations. ‾ *above* the line stands for *as:* — in the *middle* of the line for *is:* and _ *below* the line for *us.* In the prepositions and terminations some letter is selected which varies the word according to its position, in the same manner as the vowels; ./‾ for instance, is *oration;* /γ‾ *repletion;* /ρ_ *repetition;* _ *effusion.* In a similar manner ‾┐_ is *superstition;* ⌐υ_ *circumstance;* ⌐υ_ *substance.* His rules of abbreviation are simple, easy,

ingenious and useful. He expresses the different times and modes of the verb by the first consonants of the auxiliaries, as *can be;* *will be;* *have been;* *to be;* *ought to be,* &c. When initial characters are joined together so as to form two words, he makes the one to intersect the other, as *in* *to,* which are thus connected, *into:* *it* — *is,* thus *it is.* He omits the intersection, however, where no ambiguity can arise, as *it is not to be;* though it is difficult to conceive that he could carry the *t* upwards with any facility. He represents the adjective, noun, and adverb, by a point attached to the left, the bottom, the top, or the right of its root; as *forget;* *forgetful;* *forgetfulness;* *forgetfully;* *reason;* *reasonable;* *reasonableness;* *reasonably.* When the relation of two substantives to each other is so natural and intimate that no ambiguity can arise, the *initial consonants* only are employed; and a dot placed at the point of their concurrence, denotes that the latter is governed or connected to the former

	Lyle 1762.	Alphabet 1763.	Meilan 1764.	Clayton 1765.	Hodgson 1766.	Byrom 1767.
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v						
w						
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Alexander sc. et Avent.

by some preposition which is omitted: for example, in this sentence; *The sum or substance of all the commandments is contained in the two following, to wit, the* ℓ *and the love of our neighbour.* The characters for *love of God,* are immediately recognized. ℓ *love of money:* ℓ *kingdom of God:* are written upon the same principle; and the rule may be extended to a great variety and extent of combination. The same artifice, indeed, may be employed in all combinations of nouns, through the medium of prepositions, where the context may suggest the correct reading; as, *In this world all things are mixed, pleasure with pain,* ʒ *good with evil;* where the use of the word *mixed* requiring the preposition *with* after it, shews that ʒ cannot be *p* of *p*; *g* of *v*; but must be *p* with *p*; *g* with *v*. It would be impossible for me to trace the system of Mr. Byrom through all its variations, or to descant on every instance in which he has displayed his judgment, his ingenuity, and his learning; I shall therefore conclude this imperfect but I hope not inaccurate sketch of the history

of Short-hand from its earliest discovery to the first appearance of a regular, beautiful, and judicious, but defective system; by recommending the original work of BYROM as the best introduction to the theory and study of the art.

In retracing the history of Short-hand, from the publication of "*Characterie*" by JOHN WILLIS, to the time of BYROM, it is impossible not to be deeply impressed with the advantages of perseverance in every laudable object, unintimidated by the apparent difficulties which impede our progress. Had the science been abandoned in despair, after various and fruitless trials to extend its utility, how deeply and irretrievably would learning, piety and justice have suffered from a cowardice so premature and so injurious. But if our ancestors were less elegant or judicious in their taste than their more fortunate posterity, they were decidedly more distinguished by perseverance. Compared, indeed, with their successors who have flourished during the last fifty years, perseverance is the only merit which they can claim,

and it will be no ungrateful task to enter, in the succeeding chapter, into a deserved eulogy on the genius, the ingenuity, and the practical skill, that many of our modern professors have displayed.

LEWIS'S

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

OF

SHORT-HAND.

SECTION III.

IN the preceding sections I have endeavoured to trace the progress of Stenography from its rudest principles to its arrival at comparative perfection. The systematic correctness and elegance of Byrom, communicated to this ingenious and useful art, a beauty, regularity, and utility, before unknown; and will remain a perpetual memorial of his judgment, sagacity, and taste.

The labour and the skill required to the formation of the most moderate system of Shorthand, can only be appreciated by those who have attempted the experiment. The inventor of an alphabet is always doomed to the morti-

fication of finding that his practical efforts are unequal to his theoretical intentions : he constructs an alphabet in the enthusiasm of the moment, and then discovers that it abounds with imperfections; he resumes his labour, and again disappointed, probably abandons his object in despair. The greatest masters of the art have only attained perfection by unremitted and assiduous perseverance. Had BLANCHARD (discovering the imperfections of his first system) relinquished the indefatigable pursuit of excellence, how deeply would every individual interested in the progress of Stenography, have had occasion to regret his determination! It is not improbable that BYROM had tried, practiced, and invented an hundred systems, previous to his adoption of the loop; and the most celebrated authors in this branch of art, have found occasion, in every new edition of their works, to confess their errors, and suggest alterations and improvements.

But if the imperfect efforts of ingenious men could enable the student to accomplish all the purposes of expeditious writing, it may reasonably be expected that the advan-

tages derived from the experience of our predecessors, and from the contemplation of their abortive as well as their successful efforts, will enable the later Stenographers to avoid their errors, and profit by their instructions. In the list of those publications which are about to be analyzed, a perceptible improvement in arrangement, simplicity, of construction, brevity, distinctness, and all the other qualities of Short-hand is perceptible; and many of the latest systems, which collectively exhibit no peculiar merits, abound with ingenious expedients and useful observations.

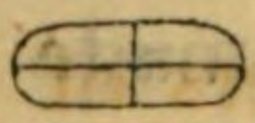
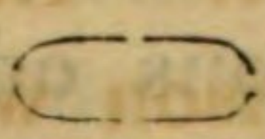
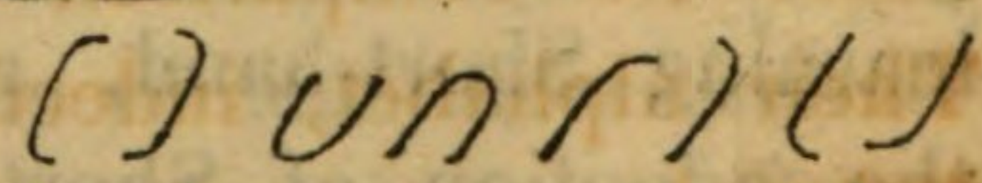
The excellence of Short-hand depends on the combination of distinctness, beauty, and expedition. To the *first* of these qualities, the claims of the ancient Stenographers were few and equivocal; and to the *latter* they were unable to adduce the most trivial pretension. Yet the popularity of the art was gradually and permanently extended. The practice of meritorious men engaged in the Courts of Law, who (subjected as they were to innumerable discouragements by the im-

perfection of the systems which they were compelled to adopt) contributed to the diffusion and respectability of the science. Another circumstance tended still more powerfully to its perfection and its prevalence. Previous to the year 1772 the debates in Parliament had not been submitted to the public but in a clandestine form, and from the *notes* of the members themselves, or from the uncertain and imperfect information of the door-keepers and ushers. For the account therefore of proceedings in the houses of Lords and Commons—Short-hand was for a long time unnecessary. But when the privilege of *reporting* was once admitted, the utility of an art by which the speeches of the members could be easily and accurately embodied, recommended it to the attention of every individual connected with a public journal. The attention of men of education, respectability, and public influence, was attracted to the subject, and the circulation of every system promoted by the members of the Parliament and the luminaries of the Law. The patronage of Lord Mansfield

considerably promoted the success of BLANCHARD; and many of the brightest ornaments of the art, who yet remain to extend its fame, and improve its principles, have proved its utility in the performance of their public services. From this period the study of Short-hand has become indispensible to the student—respectable among the middle and upper classes of society—and honorable to its professors. It has now become a principal department in the routine of public education; and is considered as a preliminary and indispensible requisite to every individual who aspires to preeminence in the Pulpit, the Senate, or the Bar.

The next system in chronological succession to BYROM, is that of MR. WILLIAM HOLDSWORTH, and WILLIAM ALDRIDGE, who style themselves of the Bank of England. Their production is entitled "*Natural Short-hand, wherein the nature of speech and the manner of pronunciation are briefly explained, and a natural reason assigned from thence for the particular form of every stroke; every sin-*

gle articulation, whether vowel or consonant, is marked by a distinct single line; all the simple characters are as analogous to each other as the sounds they represent; also their conveniency for joining is commensurate, to the frequency of their use; the number of ascending and descending lines are duly proportioned to each other; and the rules for writing and contracting are few, plain and familiar: to which is annexed, a Short-hand character for expressing musical or inarticulate sounds, without the use of ruled lines." Did the principles of the system, or the general merits of the work bear any comparison with the excellencies enumerated in the title page, the perfection of Short-hand might justly be regarded as no longer a desideratum, and Messrs. HOLDSWORTH and ALDRIDGE might claim preeminence as the greatest teachers of the art. But their performance bears no comparison with their professions Their alphabet, indeed, when written with unusual accuracy, possesses an appearance of neatness, but is, in many respects, difficult to form, and obscure in its marks of

distinction. The ⌒ *g*, for example, must require to complete it, more deliberation than any two letters in a skilful alphabet. The *o* is denoted by a circle, as in Mr. Blanchard's system; but the *u* is a kind of bladder-shaped curve inclined to the right ⌀ and the *w* resembles the common written *o*. Yet with all their faults and many absurdities, the system of these gentlemen displays considerable research and ingenuity; and the introductory observations on the four first plates, which are given as introductory to their alphabet, rather than as indispensible to its attainment, may be read with pleasure and advantage. After proceeding, in the manner of Byrom, to estimate the number of straight lines, and to divide the circle into segments, they adopt the same method with the ellipsis, inclining it many directions; for instance,  from which they obtain  In the same manner produces  characters which evidently possess neither the distinctness nor facility that would justify their adoption to express important letters.

They even proceed so far as to suggest the inclination of the ellipsis itself, as forming loops of considerable utility They suggest the possibility of deducing an alphabet from observation on the motions of the tongue, the conformation of the tongue, and the pressure of the lips; an idea which is more amusing than satisfactory. Their fourth plate is a list of the proportional number of the letters, in the Common and Short-hand Orthography. Their system of prepositions and terminations nearly resemble that of Mr. Blanchard's *second* system, in which a dot in different positions, represent *con, contra, tion, ify, &c.* Two dots placed *below* the word, indicate that two or more words have been omitted. A single dot in the same position shews the word to be abbreviated. The *m* made long is *dm, dom*; the *r* made long is *war, were, where.* Some general observations on the best mode of learning Short-hand, and a suggestion for the adoption of Short-hand characters for *musical sounds,* elucidated by a plate, concludes the volume.

"*A new scheme of Short-hand, being an improvement upon* Mr. Byrom's *universal English Short-hand.*" was published by John Palmer, in 1774. It contains an ingenious defence of Byrom's system, and of the employment of the loops, but exhibits many of the very errors and imperfections which it is its object to correct. He asserts that ᜊ is shorter than ᜊ for though there is a portion of a small circle in the former instance more than in the latter, yet there is a caution necessary in returning the pen along the same stroke, by which more *time* is lost. It is for this reason (he observes) that the common Running-hand abounds with loops. It is singular that after having severely censured Mr. Byrom for the resemblance between his letters (((though the first of them is carried in a different direction from the former two, he should himself adopt the similar characters ((((As the *b* is written thus (and the *r* thus (the *br* is distinguished from a long *b* by a mark of division, thus (*br*, a precaution more troublesome than necessary. This

practice, however, is improved where the word consists of more than one syllable: ʃ represents, for example, *btr*, and by exchange *ptr*, which intersected by — *s*, becomes a symbol of *spetator* or *spectator*, -ʃ by dividing the *p* ʃ into two parts, *p* and *t*. The rest of his system only varies from Byrom by a few trivial and useless emendations.

That production was succeeded in 1775, by the system of Messieurs Robert Graves, and Samuel Ashton, teachers of the Mathematics in Gainsborough, entitled "*The whole art of Tachygraphy, or Short-hand writing made plain and easy.*" It is chiefly remarkable for the use of an inclined *O* for the *f* (which might better have been supplied by the regular loop or circle, which they have devoted to the *y*) by the selection of similar characters for the letters most resembling each other in sound, and by its general simplicity. They reject, however, *w*, when employed as a vowel; and represent the *h* and the *th* by the same character. Their rules of abbreviation are too brief and general to require particular notice.

The "*Stenography, or a concise and practical system of Short-hand writing,*" by WILLIAM WILLIAMSON, published in 1775, is evidently the foundation of that of TAYLOR, and is itself constructed on the model of BYROM and PALMER. His *r*, like that of TAYLOR, is made like that of the common Running-hand, and evidently requires (important as the letter must be considered) as much time as to write *mprn* in the system of BYROM quickly written. The same gentleman published in 1780, "*An Essay on Short-hand writing,*" being an appendix to his own Stenography, which contains a hasty, imperfect and superficial view of the history of the art.

The most imperfect and unsatisfactory of all the attempts to improve the utility and extend the practice of Short-hand, is "*A Short-hand Dictionary,*" published in the year 1777, and borrowed, without skill or elegance, from the work of MR. GURNEY. It consists of a series of plates, the first and second containing arbitrary characters, chiefly adopted from GURNEY; the third of arbitrary

characters, shortening rules, and rules for spelling; and the rest of a complete Dictionary of several thousand words, written in columns, on opposite pages, so that the first column of the interpretation and the first word corresponds with the first of the short-hand plate. It is evident that, had a design of this kind been tolerably executed, it would have been of some service to the uninitiated pupil, and might have served to refresh the memory of those who had discontinued, for any length of time, the practice of the art. But the alphabet is highly uncouth; all the imperfections of GURNEY are retained; and the instructions are brief and superficial. The author adopts, however, the use of dots as auxiliary in expressing the vowels to the plan of GURNEY, and employs the shortening rules of the latter. After all it may be reasonably doubted whether any real advantage can be obtained from a Short-hand Dictionary; since in a really correct and expeditious system, every word in the language may be written on a few certain principles, easily remembered,

and more easy of reference than any Dictionary, however ingenious or compendious.

"*The Writer's time Redeemed, and Speaker's words Recalled by a pen shaped both for oral expedition, and the most legible plainness and punctuality; or, Annet's Short-hand perfected,*" by Thomas Hervey, printed in 1779, at Kendal; combines the faults of Annett with absurdities peculiar to itself. The *a* and *e* differ only in thickness; *aa* is represented by two horizontal lines, one above, or following, the other, as = — — *b* with a *dot* in *front* stands for *before;* with a *dot* at the *bottom* for *below,* &c. The *h* and *s* // only differ in size and thickness; the *m* and the *n* cannot be distinguished from each other: *m* with a *dot* represents the *middle* or *midst*; *p* above the line represents *upper*; *pp, upper part*; *p most*, is *uppermost*; *pb* small, *presbyter;* *pp* broad, *public papers.* In the same manner he proceeds through the whole of the alphabet in a method so complex, confused, and indistinct, as equally to baffle the attention of

the learner, and excite the astonishment of the professor.

In 1779, Mr. W. I. Blanchard first appeared in the capacity of a tutor of Short-hand, under the title of "*A Complete system of Short-hand, being an improvement upon all the authors whose systems have yet been made public.*" On this abortive attempt at a system of Short-hand, illustrated by a single plate, and containing little more than a simple alphabet, it may justly be observed, that it is extremely unworthy of the skilful and ingenious author who afterwards produced the most elegant, expeditious and scientific work, which had been yet presented to the attention of the British people.

Mr. Blanchard's *second* system of Stenography was published by subscription, in the year 1786, under the title of "*The complete instructor of Short-hand, upon principles applicable to the European Languages; also to the technical terms used by anatomists, and more comprehensive and easy to write and read than any other system hitherto published.*"

	Holdsw.th 1768.	Palmer 1774.	Graves 1775.	Will.mson 1775.	Dict.ry 1777.	Hervey 1779.
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Alexander sc. 290 Strand.

I have no hesitation in numbering this treatise among the highest efforts of the art. His alphabet, it is true, though ingeniously constructed, is liable to many important objections: the *b*, the *i*, and the *r*, only differ from each other in size, and notwithstanding the author asserts, from his own experience, that the same letter may be made for *b*, as for *i* and *y*, as the reader will discover from the context for which it is intended; yet the adoption of these similar characters, will, in my own opinion, be productive of much perplexity, even to the most advanced student of the science. It must be extremely difficult, for instance, for the most skilful practitioner to distinguish at a moment's glance, between and without the addition of a vowel; or between *youth* and *booth*, The circular loop appropriated to the *a* and *w* might have been devoted to many more useful and expeditious purposes, than those which they now perform: the *f*, is one of the slowest and most embarrassing characters that could have been selected; and the *ch* only differs

from *c* in size, ⊂⊂. The *q* and the *t* || differ only in length; and the *g* and the *th* \\ have the same defect. Notwithstanding these errors and deficiences, the taste, skill, and ingenuity displayed in this alphabet, are deserving of the highest praise; and the lovers of the science will always number in the list of its most celebrated professors the name of BLANCHARD. His system of prepositions and interjections is unrivalled, for distinctness, expedition, and simplicity.—He forms these primary and concluding syllables by the use of dots in various situations:—*com, con, cum, ab, ob,* are denoted by a dot *over* the *top* of the succeeding letter: *au, re, ante, anti, inter, intro,* by a dot to the *top* of the left; *pre, pro, pri, per, prin,* by a dot in the *middle* of the left; and *un, under,* &c., by a dot at the *bottom* of the left, as ⌒ *uncertain;* ⌒ *understand;* &c. His terminations for *ary, ery, ation, etion, ant, ent,* &c. &c., are formed on the same principle as ⌐ *diary;* ⌐ *dictation;* &c. His list of prepositions and terminations are still further increased on the plan of BYROM, and other

Short-hand writers, by placing letters instead of points, in the situation of those points, by which an enormous power is obtained, and each single stroke contains in its situation two or three syllables, as *circumcision*; *accomplish*; *competent*; *comprehend*; in which words the *c* represents *circum* and *accom*, and the *p comp*, *compre*, The same plan is adopted with the terminating syllables. His system of terminations is succeeded by a series of general rules for the most part extremely ingenious and judicious. Specimens of auxiliary verbs joined together, as *can be*; *will be*, &c. conclude the volume. In his rules for contraction, he observes, that the primary syllable and the next letter being formed, the rest of the word may safely be omitted. All proper names and technical terms of frequent occurrence may be expressed, after the first or second time, by their initial and a terminating point; or by a point representing deficiency: for a common *repetition*, a line must be drawn *under* the preceding word, but where there are repetitions of

sentences with an additional word to be added, draw a slant stroke long enough to go *quite through* the line of writing, crossing the line, and then add the word which is to follow it.—

Such are the outlines of a system which it is impossible for the professor of the art to admire too much, and which the novice in the science would do well to study with the most assiduous attention. That the many experiments for the perfection of Short-hand, and the indefatigable enquires of latter teachers and amateurs may have obviated some of his defects, and improved his excellencies, does not detract from his great and original merit. He far surpassed, in the formation of his system, all who had preceded him; his system, at the period of its publication, was perfectly unrivalled, in elegance and dispatch; and even those who studiously endeavour to correct and improve it, will be the most anxious to attribute deserved praise to the merits of their great original.

Among the inventors of an original system, (whatever may be thought of its intrinsic

excellence) must be numbered Mr. Samuel Soare, with "*Tachybrachygraphy, or the swiftest method of Short Writing, consisting of the most simple and distinct characters, and the readiest manner of combining them.*" printed in the year 1780. He adopts the same characters for *a e i y,—tch, j k g,—a o u w,—b p f v,—sz, sh,—t d th.* On the absurdity of a system so liable to uncertainty and confusion, in which *church, cork* and *george,—proof, five* and *above,* are liable to be confounded with each other; all comment would be superfluous.

The next in succession to Mr. Soare, was the author of "*Ars Scribendi, sine penna; or, how to take down, verbatim, a week's pleading upon one page, a work of infinite importance to Members of Parliament, Ministers of State, Gentlemen of the Law, Physic, and Divinity.*" This production was printed in 1782, and is anonymous; but is known to be the production of Mr. John Mitchell, who published a *second edition* in 1783, entitled "*Ars scribendi sine penna, or, the*

art of taking down sermons, trials, speeches, &c, verbatim, without pen and ink, and upon one page." And in 1784, he appeared as the author of a work entitled "*The most rational, easy, and speedy method of writing Short-hand, without pen and ink.*" It will require the ingenuity of some future age to discover a worse system than that of Mr. Mitchell; his alphabet, (as may be seen from the specimen,) possesses all the faults without any of the excellencies of his predecessors; which have been already explained. He adopts the plan of abbreviation suggested by Weston, and spoils it by his own unskilful deviations. His representation of the creed (engraved as it is for the purpose of recommending his system) is at once unsightly in appearance, and unintelligible in construction. It has to the eye the appearance of shortness, but must have required as much time for its spontaneous formation as the same specimen in the common Running-hand. So seldom, however, is reward proportioned to desert, that his works obtained a very extensive circulation.

"*Stenography, or the most easy and concise method of writing Short-hand, on an entire new plan, adapted to every capacity, and to the use of Schools,*" by M. Nash, has been long adopted in Seminaries of instruction for its apparent simplicity and neatness. His preface and introduction are written with considerable elegance and judgment; and his system has, at least, the merit of being readily understood by tender capacities. He represents the vowels by distinct characters, and adopts the most useful curves &c., employed by Byrom, while he avoids the use of loops.

In 1786, a system was published under the title of "*An Essay intended to establish a standard for an universal System of Stenography, or Short-hand writing,*" by Samuel Taylor, many years professor and teacher of the science at Oxford, and the Universities of Scotland and Ireland. The work is dedicated to Lord North, and is sanctioned by the names of highly respectable subscribers, among others of the Attorney

General, the Bishop of Bangor, and the Duke of Devonshire. He observes, in his introduction, that there is no existing system with which he is thoroughly satisfied; and comments with justice on the imperfections of his predecessors. In the first place (he remarks) their alphabets are improperly chosen, and as improperly applied; most of their letters being a combination of characters so awkwardly formed, that if a practitioner can make them at all, it is with the greatest difficulty; and it is with still more difficulty that he can join them one to another, so as to make them be properly distinguished when written. The most simple and proper characters he had seen were thrown away chiefly on such consonants as are seldom met with in the common course of writing; while characters more difficult are assigned to those which commonly occur. After obviating several popular objections to the use of Short-hand, Mr. Taylor proceeds to adduce the testimony of the celebrated Dr. Beattie, the author of the "*Minstrel,*" in favour of his system. His alphabet,

however, neither possesses peculiar excellencies, or is totally free from the errors and imperfections of his predecessors. The important letter *b* is represented by one of the most awkward looped characters ९, and the common *r* is employed in a similar manner with that adopted by a writer who has been already quoted. The loops themselves are less ingeniously adapted for joining and for expedition than those of Byrom, and appears to be an indispensible objection to his system. Unless much time be employed in its formation the ⌒ *th* when joined with an *n* ∪ as ⌒ *then*, is apt to be confounded with ⌒ *chin*. He represents his vowels by dots, to be used only when they sound strong at the beginning or end of a word. His rules of abbreviation are few and common, and the whole treatise is more to be admired for its neatness and elegance, than for its usefulness and ingenuity.

An improvement upon the art of Swift-writing was published in the year 1787, by

	Blanch. 1779.	Blanch. 1786.	Soare 1780.	Mitchell 1782.	Nash 1783.	Taylor 1786.
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Alexander sc. 230 Strand.

Mr. William Graham, under the title of "*Stenography, or an easy system of Short-hand Writing.*" His system resembles that of Nash, and notwithstanding some of his alphabetical marks bear too great a resemblance to each other to be readily distinguished, if not made with greater accuracy, than can be observed when dispatch is required;—yet Mr. Graham's method is superior, in many respects, to the majority of his predecessors.—The principles upon which it is founded are, in the main, rational, his characters are simple, and for the most part fitly applied.

In 1789, Dr. William Mavor, of the Academy at Woodstock, committed to the world "*Universal Stenography, or a plain and practical system of Short-writing.*" The general principles of Dr. Mavor's system nearly accord with those of Taylor, but he is more profuse of his loops, and less judicious in their application. In the selection of his alphabetical characters, as well as in their arrangement, he is, indeed, extremely

deficient, and his "*Paradigm of the various combinations of the Characters*" exhibits some of the most awkward and unscientific modes of junction ever beheld. He expresses the *o, u,* and *y* by a *dot*; and the *a, e,* and *i,* by a *comma* in *three* different positions. He retains looped characters for *ch, sh, th, thr, str, wh.* His rules for abbreviation are short and superficial, and he denotes his prepositions and terminations in the usual way by prefixing and affixing the initial letter of the syllable, as *abstain.* Among eight other arbitrary characters he represents *on* and *one* by *two dots* in a perpendicular line, and *for* by *two dots* in an horizontal line; though it is evident that both *one* and *for* could be much more rapidly expressed by the regular employment of the Short-hand alphabet. He employs dots *above* and *below* the line to express a substantive or other parts of speech. Upon the whole, the system of MAVOR has added but *little* to the knowledge or extension of the art; and his only claim to originality depends upon his introduction of the comma to represent the vowels in conjunction with the period.

The system of SAMUEL TAYLOR having been received by the public with an encouragement fully equal to its deserts; a book-seller republished the "*Stenography*" of HENRY TAPLIN, in 1791, and prefixed to the title page, the name of R. TAILOR, an artifice by which many individuals were deluded into the purchase of one of the most obscure, imperfect, and contemptible systems that had ever been presented to the world.

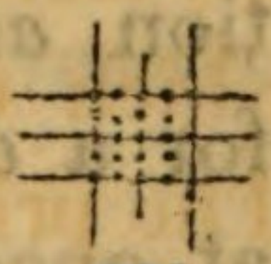
The only treatise which appears to have obtained or deserved any celebrity in France, is a modification of that of TAYLOR, adapted to the peculiarities of the French language, by THEODORE PIERRE BERTIN, and published at Paris, in 1792, by DIDOT the elder. The preface contains an elegant but superficial sketch of the history of the art. The alphabet only varies from that of TAYLOR by the omission of the *w*, the *sh*, the *th*, and the *ious*; while the rest of the system is precisely the same as that of his English model.

The work of Mr. Thomas Rees, which made its appearance in the year 1795, entitled "*A new system of Stenography, or Short-hand,*" is, like that of his friend Dr. Mavor, founded on the principles of Taylor, but adapted with little skill or ingenuity; the *m*, and *o*, resemble each other so nearly as to be confounded in expeditious writing, and to be illegible at a short distance of time, and the *r*, *x*, and *w*, display the same deformity. He does not employ dots or commas for vowels, but connected characters, *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, *y*. His rules are few, short, and superficial. His prepositions and terminations are on the same plan with those of Mavor, and his work concludes with a list of twenty-four arbitrary characters.

In modern times the knowledge which other nations have possessed, and the progress they have made in the rudiments of Short-hand, have been solely derived from the labours of the English. The imitation of Taylor by a French writer, who is con-

sidered at Paris as the only able instructor of the art, has been already mentioned, and this compendium first excited any degree of Stenographic emulation on the Continent of Europe. In 1797, appeared at Leipsic, a system of Stenography, by KARL GOTTLIEB HORSTIG, written in German, and accommodated with considerable skill to the peculiarities of that language. But the alphabet is radically defective: it is characterized by the circumstance which I have so often had occasion to regret, the employment of letters, similar in shape but different in size, for different letters, as ◡ ◡ *f*, *v*, and *w*; ⌒ ⌒ *s*, *ss*, and *sch*; ⊂ ⊂ *h*, and *ch*; ⊃ ⊃ *g*, *j*, *k*, and *ch*, &c. The *m*, is formed in this manner ⤷ which of course, requires three movements. The principal merit of this system is its neatness of appearance.

One of the most ingenious and original systems that human invention has produced, appeared in 1800, from the pen of MR. SAMUEL RICHARDSON, under the title of "*A new system of Short-hand, by which more may be*

written in one hour, than in an hour and a half by any other system hitherto published; which is here fully demonstrated by a fair comparison with one of the best systems extant, with a short and easy method by which any person may determine, even before he learns this system, whether it will enable him to follow a speaker." After arranging his alphabet, which is extremely neat and simple, Mr. Richardson proceeds to explain his invention of certain lines, which are intended among other things, to express the *first letter* of every word we write. For this purpose he draws *two* perpendicular and *three* horizontal lines, between which are placed the imaginary positions of the letters of the alphabet. For example, in the following diagram  the first dot represents the situation of the *a* point, the second of the *e* point, &c. The places are called by the names of the letters, and in writing any word, the learner lays his pen on the place which represents the *initial* of that word, and from thence proceeds to write the *second* letter. In the word *mind*, for instance, he omits the *i*, and places his

pen on the *m* point, where he forms the *second* letter. In proof of the facility with which these positions may be learned, Mr. Richardson adduces the example of a printing compositor, whose hand moves with rapidity from one letter-box to another; and asks if any Short-hand writer thinks himself incapable of equal dexterity? He then proceeds to explain his method in detail, by the selection of such words and combinations as are formed most easily. *End* is written by laying the pen on *e* and writing *nd*; *examine* by laying the pen on *x* and writing *mn*; *chance* by laying the pen on *ch* and writing *ns*. A *dot* in the place of *a* stands for the article *a*, and the conjunction *and*: but if a *comma* be substituted for a *dot*, this *comma* stands for two words at once; the conjunction *and*, and the article *the*. A *dot* in the place called *b* stands for *be, by*, &c., but a *comma* in the same place represents *be the, by the*, &c. In the same manner by *dots* and *commas*, he writes *do, die, duty, duties*; and *day, days, daily*. His prepositions and terminations also are

expressed by *dots* in particular positions among the lines; though this appears to be a contrivance of no particular advantage, as the *dot* might be made for prepositions and terminations, were the lines entirely excluded. The letter *k* is used to express *act, ect, ict, uct;* but in the *two first* cases the *k* is begun in the vowel *a's* place, in the *third* in the vowel *i's* place, and in the *last* in the vowel *u's* place. He forms the words *I do,* by placing his pen on the place allotted to *o* or *do,* and makes the *i,* or if he wishes to denote *I did,* he lays his pen on the place which stands for *did,* and makes the same character as before. He has also another position for *ought,* on which, as before, by marking the character for *i,* he makes *I ought.*

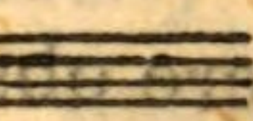
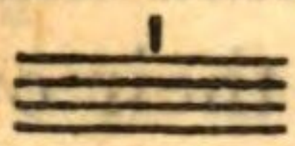
That this system includes a fewer number of strokes in the formation of any particular sentence, than all which preceded it, and that it displays much research, labour, and ingenuity, cannot be denied; but it may be doubted whether the difficulty of attaining it, the minute accuracy required in observing

the positions, and its ambiguity to the most unpractised eye, may not more than counterbalance its other excellencies. As a study for the lover of the art, an amusement for the student, and a subject of curiosity to the inquisitive, it has considerable merits; but it can never be regarded as a *useful* system of Short-hand, attainable by moderate application, adapted to the majority of capacities, and to be written with practical dexterity.

The most complex method that has yet appeared, is a system which wheels about in a strange incoherent manner, and was lately published by a person who styles himself "*An eminent Short-hand writer,*" under the following title "*The elementary principles of Short-hand, exemplified in a variety of easy lessons, by which a knowledge of that useful and elegant art is attainable, in a few hours, by the most common capacity.*" This insignificant work is erroneously stated to be an improvement upon Mr. Weston's "*Short-hand Grammar,*" but is, in fact, only a transcript of Mr. Mitchell's

imperfect publications, which have been already noticed. There are *three different alphabets,* exactly similar to those of his original. The specimens of writing are the strangest and most complex characters that ever were observed in Short-hand, and carry in their appearance the evidence of their own absurdity.

One of the most ingenious and singular productions upon the science of Stenography was produced at Paris, in 1801, under the title (in French) of "*Okygraphie, or the art of noting down, or embodying in writing, all the sounds of speech with as much facility, rapidity, and clearness, as they can be expressed by the mouth: a new method adapted to the French language, and applicable to all its idioms; presenting the surest means of conducting a secret correspondence, of which the characters shall defy the severest scrutiny.*" by HONORE BLANC. In this system, which is peculiarly adapted to the French language, which, *in its pronunciation,* abounds with words of one and two syllables, pro-

nounced nearly alike in their termination, however they be spelt, as *dignement, comment, tems, autant,* &c. The principle of musical lines is uniformly adopted: a perpendicular stroke placed *above* the first of four lines ruled in this manner  is *b*, as  ; cutting the *first* line, it is *p*; between the *first* and the *second* line it is *d*; and so on. The number of sounds in the French language, compared with the English, are few and their construction uniform. An Englishman when he reads the letters *mnd,* omitting the vowel, may be at a loss, without the context, to ascertain whether they represent *mand, mend, mind,* or *mond*; but a Frenchman on seeing the three characters *mnt,* would, in six cases out of seven, from the simple construction of his language, pronounce it *ment,* which is the most frequent pronunciation of their final nasal syllable in whatever manner it be spelt. Even the French, however, I am afraid will find this system of "*Okygraphie*" more ingenious than useful; as will be the case with all Stenographic inventions depending on the position of the consonants.

	Graham 1787.	Mavor 1789.	Rees 1795.	Horstig 1797.	Rich[dsn] 1800.	Blanc 1801.
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The next publication in succession, was "*The art of writing Short-hand made easy, by which this useful art may be attained in the course of a few days,*" printed at Sheffield, in 1801, by JOHN CROME. The most striking feature of this work, which consists only of fifteen pages in a pocket size, is the transformation of the rules into doggerel verse. As for the alphabet, it will be sufficient to observe, that though the author does not retain the loops he has fallen into a greater error, by devoting to two letters characters the same in shape, and only different in size; a principle that may be admitted in linear characters representing letters approaching in sound, as / *t*; / *th*; but cannot receive the same indulgence when applied to letters so dissimilar as *k* ⊂ and *p* ⊂; *h* ⌒ and *m* ⌒; *l* ◡ and *w* ◡: This is precisely the fault of the system of MR. REES already noticed.

The "*New system of Short-hand, in which legibility and brevity are secured upon the most natural principles,*" published in 1802,

by Richard Roe, displays no originality in its elucidation of the general rudiments of the art, but is remarkable as forming the first attempt to construct an alphabet sloping uniformly in one direction. The very formation, however, of his letters implies that they cannot be written singly above one half as fast as a well constructed angular alphabet: and if any thing be gained by their regular inclination, (which I much doubt) the inconvenience arising from the circular and difficult formation of the letters, more than counterbalances that advantage. But the chief objection to the system is the strong resemblance of the writing to the common Running-hand, a similiarity which burthens the memory, perplexes the judgment, and injures the Common-hand, without enabling the student to acquire the practice of Stenography.

In the year 1802, a method of Short-hand writing was published by Thomas Hodson. The improvement he proposes, appears exceedingly prolix. The marks which he ap-

plies to the letters of his *alphabet*, are many of them irregular curve-lines; others are so alike in form, that it must be very difficult, if not quite impracticable, to make them distinct, when writing fast. This system of Mr. Hodson, is the shortest of any, except Richardson's, that has yet been noticed; but then it is the *least legible*. Neither the contracting rules, nor the application of them, discover any peculiar excellence: therefore, upon a thorough investigation, I found myself deceived in the hopes I had entertained of gaining some improvement by Mr. Hodson's publication, finding his system not so good as many others that had appeared before it.

In 1802, an Anonymous production, entitled "*Stenography, or the art of Short-hand perfected*," was published by Lackington, Allen, and Co., Finsbury Square. The title page is ornamented with the delineation of an angel soaring above the clouds, inscribing within an oval figure, enveloped by lines representing the rays of the sun, the fol-

lowing motto in Stenographic characters:— "*The best sign that one know a thing well, is to be in a condition to teach it others.*" Their book contains nothing else worthy of observation. There is no superiority in their system of abbreviation, and their alphabet is borrowed, without skill or elegance, from that of TAYLOR. The instructions are brief, superficial, and, in some respects, rendered extremely complex. MESSRS. LACKINGTON and Co., appear, indeed, (like other speculative booksellers who have, from time to time, amused the public with their theoretical publications on this art) to be entirely ignorant of the true nature of Short-hand; and the improvement they have unjustly claimed, exists no where but in their own fancy.

"*Short-hand, or the flying pen, being a new and simplified system of Short-hand writing,*". published in 1803, and "*The Arcana of Short-hand, or Expeditious writing made easy,*" published in 1805, are the production of HENRY EWINGTON, M. M. a gentleman entirely ignorant of the common

principles of grammar, and whose portrait (prefixed to his *last* production) exhibits the most evident and extraordinary traces of dulness and stupidity. Both of these insignificant and useless works are poor and petty imitations of BYROM; abounding with looped characters, to the exclusion of simple ones, and containing not a single observation calculated to facilitate the progress of the art.

"*Short-hand made easy to every capacity, or a new system of Stenography.*" Published in 1803, by M. RADCLYFFE PROSSER, is a combination of the systems of the "*Alphabet of Reason,*" and of HOLDSWORTH and ALDRIDGE. It contains a table of the same description as that embodied in the former of these works. But in endeavouring to unite the excellencies of both, he has adopted all their faults. He adopts two irregularly curved characters for *b* and *p*; a straight line and a curved character for *d*; an inclined ellipsis *0* for the scarcer diphthongs; a large circle for the *w*; a small circle for *eo, io,* and

other more frequent diphthongs, and ʃ for *th*, a character which evidently requires nearly as much time for its formation as his own *th* h. His *h* itself is awkwardly constructed ∩ and cannot be written in a less interval than three letters properly constructed, or ⌒ joined together. By the employment of more than one character for some of his letters, he certainly gives to his manuscript an appearance of fallacious neatness, but it is of more consequence to the Short-hand writer, that he should be able to follow the delivery of a speaker, than that his slow and deliberate painting should delight the eye.

His publication, entitled "*Criptography, or, an Essay intended to render* Common Writing *sufficiently brief to note down the words of Orations, &c.*" is only a transposition of the letters of the alphabet for the purpose of secrecy and expedition. There are *two alphabets* of large or capital letters; and *two alphabets* of small letters. The forms of some of the letters are a little varied, and which it is necessary to observe in order to avoid ambiguity.

In 1804, Mr. Thomas Molineux, of Macclesfield, presented to the world his third edition of Byrom, under the title of "*An Introduction to Mr. Byrom's Universal English Short-hand, or the way of writing English in the most easy, concise, regular, and beautiful manner, in a series of letters addressed to a young friend.*" The chief merit of this work, considered as an epitome of Byrom, is, the beauty of the plates, and the distinctness of the rules; the deviations from the original being few and trivial, and consisting chiefly in omissions. The cheapness, elegance, and simplicity of arrangement, so conspicuous in this publication, combined with the excellence of the original system, render it a useful and instructive manual to those who are anxious to learn that system on account of its own merits, or as preparatory to the study of other compendiums.

"*The Amanuensis; or, Complete practical system of Short-hand, adapted to every capacity.*" published in 1804, by H. D. Symonds, and T. Ostell, presents another specimen

	Crome 1801.	Roe 1802.	Hodson 1802.	Ewing.m 1803.	Profser 1803.	Molin.x 1804.
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Alexander sculp. Strand.

of those numerous absurd and useless Stenographic productions which have been imposed upon the public by the booksellers. The principles of this system are filched from the work of Dr. Mavor, upon whose publication they have made no improvement, but, in some respects, rendered it more complex.—The alphabet is precisely similar, and is liable to the same objections.—Their examples have no superiority.—Their rules of abbreviation are too brief and general to require particular notice; and the rest of the system only varies from Mavor by a few trivial and useless emendations.

I have already expressed my opinion of Rich's system, and the experience of Nicholson and others who have been compelled to abandon it, is the most decisive proof of its various imperfections; and the improvements of Dr. Philip Doddridge, whose manuscript of that system has been extensively circulated among the religious circles of society, is a circumstance only to be attributed to the homage and veneration in

which his memory is held. His treatise after remaining in possession of his executors for many years, was published at Oxford, in 1805, entitled "*A system of Short-hand invented by* Mr. Jeremiah Rich, *and improved by* Dr. Doddridge." But it neither deserves nor requires further observations.

In 1806, a production was issued from the press of Mr. George Nicholson, of Ludlow, written in conjunction with his brother, Mr. Samuel Nicholson, under the title of "*Stenography, or a new system of Short-hand, included in a single page.*" Having discovered the imperfections of Rich's system after a long and laborious practice, they compiled from other authors, and from repeated examinations and frequent attempts at improvement, completed their published system. It is to be regretted, that industry so exemplary, and so ardent an attachment to the art, should have been so unprofitably employed; for the "*single page*" containing the principles of the art exhibits evident traces of inutility and absurdity. The *a* is represented by three

marks thus | / \ which only differ from the *b*, *t* and *d*, in their comparative length; the *l* and the *r* ⌒ ⌒ have the same defect; and the *v's* ∩ ∪ are always liable to be mistaken for the *ch* and *sh* ∩ ∪ in addition to which fault, all these last mentioned letters require as much time to express them with accuracy as the *v's*, *&c.*, of the common alphabet. The characters to which this objection does not apply are very unskilfully constructed. Not content with the use of ⊂ ⊂ for *p*, they likewise employ for the same letter an irregular and awkward curve, or rather a compound of a curve and a straight line, which requires *three* movements of the pen ⊂ One of the *o's* is represented by the characters ⁄ which, in a tolerable system, would spell the words *roar* or *rear*; and many examples occur of the same imperfection. The alphabet *looks*, indeed, neat and concise upon paper, but the apparent lightness and thinness of the writing, as it appears on the paper, is seldom owing (in books of Short-hand) to the merits of the system, but the time and the labour occupied in

preparing it for public inspection, and the dexterity of the engraver.

Among many other systems which serve only to deceive the public, is "*A new system of Stenography*" published in 1808, by BENJAMIN VALE.—This work is chiefly founded upon that of GURNEY.—His rules are few, short, and superficial, and a single glance at his alphabet will prove its insufficiency: many of his characters are complicated, and such as are simple in their form are improperly applied.—There is, moreover, a sameness of construction in different characters, and combination of characters, by which his system is rendered exceedingly difficult to write, and very abstruse and puzzling to read.

In 1810, appeared "*MAVOR abbreviated, by the application of a new principle to his celebrated system of Universal Stenography: being an entirely new and complete book of Shorthand, perfectly legible, distinct in all its parts, and adapted to every purpose of neat and expeditious writing.*" by J. H. CLIVE. He

observes in his preface, that many Shorthand writers have in their alphabets, expressed two letters by one particular kind of stroke, with this distinction only, that, for one of the letters the stroke has been made *upward,* and for the other *downward,* than which, no two strokes, when in combination, can be more distinct; for a line struck upward like the top of an *l* is as easy to be distinguished from the same kind of line, when made downward like the bottom of a *p,* as a curved line from a straight one. This idea he has enlarged upon, and by applying the principle of it to the different elementary characters in general use among Shorthand writers, he found that he should have simple strokes enough, and such as were sufficiently easy of junction, to express nearly all the consonants of the alphabet; and that each of those strokes would be as different from any other as was necessary; which he considered as the most material point, next to brevity, in any system. Here then (he observes) would be an alphabet without compound characters; and the circles usually at-

tached to strokes to mark their diversity, would be at his service for other purposes. To reduce this to practice he uses a LINE, *real* or *imaginary*, to distinguish the *up* from the *down* strokes, when standing alone; and he fixes upon MAVOR's system as the foundation of his own; expunging from the alphabet of the latter the letters that are compound, and inserting simple ones on his own principles. It is obvious, that by this ingenious and easy plan, a very useful and expeditious system of Short-hand might be formed, since the junction of ∿ *mr*, could never be mistaken for ⊃ *ml*; and the positions are only necessary where the characters stand alone. MR. CLIVE, however, has very injudiciously recommended a line, relative to which, the initial letter of the word shall be placed where there is no possibility of mistake. He deserves the praise, however, of skill, elegance, and ingenuity.

In 1811, GUILLELMO ATANASIO XARAMILLO, published, at Cadiz, in the Spanish language, "*Curso de Taquigrafia Espanola, or a course*

of Spanish Short-hand " He divides his characters into the pure *a, e, i o, u,* and into the impure which he divides into labials, or words formed by the pressure of the lips; dentilabials formed by the conjoined operation of the lips and teeth; dentals formed by the teeth; paladials formed by the palate; paladilinguals formed by the palate and the teeth; and gutturals issued from the throat. The alphabet is adapted from that of MASON, to the construction of the Spanish language. The mode of joining and of spelling exactly resembles that which is generally practised by English Stenographers; the rules of abbreviation are omitted, and the book (small as it is) is chiefly filled with eulogies of the author's tutor who taught him Stenography at Madrid, and attestations to the utility of his system.

In 1812, " *A Complete and Universal system of Stenography, or, Short-hand rendered easy and familiar to the meanest capacity, on a plan entirely new* " was published by MR. SAMUEL SAMS, a teacher of Geogra-

phy, at BATH, and lately *a superficial Mnemoniest.* This system presents a singular example of ingenuity devoted to a chimerical and unattainable object. Adopting the linear principle of RICHARDSON, but on a more simple construction; he distinguishes the various characters by their position upon *two* horizontal lines ═══. In his efforts to represent a great variety of syllables by distinct characters, as ✓ *bre;* ◟ *gle;* ⌕ *stre, &c.,* he exhausts his simple characters, and is reduced to the necessity of representing his *r* by an inclined ellipsis ⌓ and his *th* by the same figure placed horizontally ⊃ Independent likewise of this absurdity, the same character is frequently employed to denote two or three important syllables on which the whole construction of a sentence may depend. ⊂ for example, is the Stenographic substitute for *ba, bla,* and *bra;* ⅁ for *sca, sla, scra, sma, sna, &c.;* ϱ for *thre, tre* and *twe.* His system of lines is so constructed that no advantage is obtained by their adoption, at all equivalent to the loss of time occasioned by the necessity of fixing the pen in a particular

position. He recommends the learner to represent the plural of a word, by placing a dash over it, thus ′; an expedient which must considerably retard the fluency and swiftness of the writing. The latter part of the book is devoted to some observations on the application of Short-hand to the French and Latin languages; but his remarks are superficial and erroneous. No individual would be able to decypher a single line of his French specimen; and his remarks on the abbreviation of Latin are beneath contempt.

In 1813, a Mr. Edward Lawson, who assumes the style and title of a Barrister, comes forward to the world with all the pomposity of a profound investigator of the art, in a volume, entitled "*Chancery and Court-hand explained, with an easy, rapid, and distinct Short-hand.*" Mr. Lawson appears to have the most exalted opinion of himself, and a few of his remarks are correct and judicious. "Some (he observes) apply different characters to the same letter or sound in different parts of a word, which

	Doddridge 1805.	Nichol.sn 1806.	Vale. 1808.	Clive. 1810.	Haram.lo 1811.	Sams. 1812.
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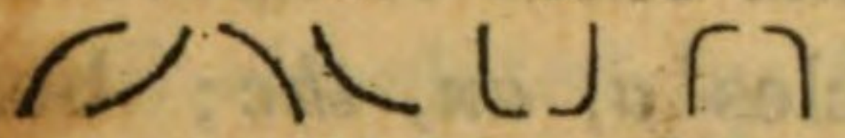
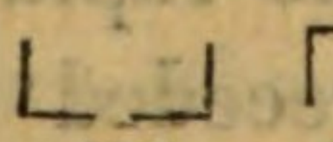
Alexander sc. 25 Str. Strand.

forces them to express other letters by combined strokes. Others make the same mark for several heterogeneous sounds. Some multiply arbitrary characters by intersections, which produces an imperceptible delay often equivalent to writing the words at length. Others, for want of due attention to the combinations of the letters, and the best modes of connecting them without hair strokes, run into vague deflections from the line: thus instead of catching sentences at sight, the eye is reduced to the toil of running up and down in pursuit of letters, whose staggering irregular meanders, resemble the doublings of a hare." He asserts that the framers of Stenographies are for the most part sequestered clergymen, raw templars, or newspaper scribblers, without legal or parliamentary experience. And therefore it is not surprising that (instead of useful abbreviations) they have accumulated complex scrawls, for recording with idle industry, all the insignificant phraseology of '*My lords and gentlemen of the jury*' — '*With all due deference.*' — '*In my humble judgment.*' —

and the like empty and soporific circumlocutions. He is of opinion that when the faults he has enumerated deform the best systems, he may be excused the ungracious task of criticising the many abortive attempts of preceding writers, and he therefore proceeds to enter upon the explanation of his own. But Mr. Lawson, like many more learned and celebrated critics, displays too frequently the self same errors which he so severely reprehends in others; and abounds in ambiguities, inadvertencies and deformities. He adopts, with Byrom, the quartering (as he denominates it) of an upright oval with an horizontal one, to represent the letters *x, h, l, p, v, j, g, im,* or *in,* in this manner  These characters are evidently liable to be confounded, and the latter four, in consequence of the greater awkwardness of their formation, are as inimical to rapidity, and as liable to induce mistakes as the angular characters  when used for a single letter. His adoption of one character for *im* or *in,* and two others for *m* and *n,* is an unnecessary and unskil-

ful violation of the first principle of Shorthand—*rapidity of combination.*—As the *im* and *in* are fully expressed by the *i* and the *m*, which, when connected, are not less easily made than the *second im*, he is guilty of a greater fault than the inventors of arbitrary characters, whom he so warmly reprobates. His double, triple, and quadruple consonants are neither correctly distinguished from their simple roots nor from each other. *In, int,* and *intr* vary only in size; and the *s, st* and *str* vary only in length; and it would be impossible to distinguish, in expeditious writing, his *gt* from his *gr*. Between several of his characters there is no distinction but that of thickness. In his rules of abbreviation he omits the articles *a, an, the*; but in other respects coincides with Coles and Mason. Notwithstanding the self-confidence of the author, his system is neither so legible—so rapid—nor so distinct, as many which preceded it.

A contemptible performance by one John Dangerfield, *a pensioner of Chelsea-hospital,*

made its appearance in 1814, it is entitled "*A new and simple system of Short-hand, by which any person may learn to write with great rapidity in a fortnight.*" It is founded on the useless and preposterous principle of alloting to several consonants the same character. His *b* and *p* are both represented by ⌒, and his *d* and *t* by |. The rest of his system deserves no particular notice, as it explains none of the principles of the art, and is only remarkable for the absurdity and inelegance of certain combinations of Short-hand, which he recommends as substitutes to the usual medical and musical characters.

A system of Short-hand, published in 1815, and circulated by Mr. James Mitchell, who styles himself M. A., is entitled "*An easy system of Short-hand, upon an entirely new plan.*" which he *falsely* asserts to be founded on long practical experience, and to perfect the learner in half the time of any other publication. It is only a servile and useless plagiarism from Mavor, and from the Encyclopædia Britannica. Instead of the natural position of

the vowels *a e i o u* in their usual order, when placed *before* a consonant, he substitutes, like MAVOR, *two* marks for the vowels, but one of these is a small upright dash, while MAVOR's is a comma. The accompanying explanations, if they do not display the higher qualities of the mind, or any unusual acquaintance with the art, may claim at least the merit of simplicity, a quality not always to be found even in the most skilful Stenographers.

MR. MITCHELL professes to teach the art of Stenography with correctness and rapidity, by the adoption of *classes* of ten and twenty, who are expected to receive from the general instruction of the teacher, that accuracy of knowledge, and readiness of practice, which can only be derived from *private* and *minute* instruction. When the expence is an object of material importance, as in public schools, where the extent of time occupied in the acquisition of an art is disregarded, and where no exercise of the intellect is required, the system of *classes* may be found extremely useful. Boys, and persons totally uneducated,

who learn every thing by rote, and have not yet acquired the free and spontaneous use of their intellectual faculties, may be taught by the mechanical and dilatory mode now alluded to. But for adults of moderate ability and intelligence, it is evidently necessary that the teacher should always be at his elbow, to solve his difficulties,—to correct his mistakes,—to assist his invention,—to explain what is ambiguous,—and even to converse and consult with him on the principles of the science. It is impossible to drill a number of adults as we would discipline a regiment of soldiers. In grown-up persons difficulties arise to some minds that do not occur in others:—men of different genius, or different pursuits, require different modes and degrees of superintendance; every pupil has his own peculiar views and ideas of the art; and the teacher, by intimate conversation, and attentive examination, (which are impossible according to the system of *classes*) will most effectually forward the pupil, and even instruct himself.

In 1815, was published "*The Ready Writer, or Ne plus ultra of Short-hand, being the most easy, exact, lineal, speedy, and legible method ever yet discovered, whereby more may be written in Forty minutes than in One hour by any other system hitherto published.*" By the new method laid down in this book, and without the assistance of a teacher, any person who can but tolerably write his name in common writing, may, with the greatest ease and certainty, take down from the speaker's mouth, any sermon, speech, trial, play, &c., word by word, and may likewise read it distinctly at any distance of time after it is written.—Invented and perfected by James Henry Lewis, of Ebley, near Stroud, Gloucestershire.

The unparalleled success which has attended the dissemination of the above system, precludes the necessity of descanting on its peculiar advantages: it is amply sufficient to observe, that it has completely superceded all others, in the courts of Law, and in both houses of Parliament,—that it is universally adopted in every respectable

	Lawson 1813.	Danger 1814.	Mitchell 1815.	Lewis 1815.	Oxley 1816.	
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Alexander sc. Strand.

Seminary of education throughout the United Kingdom; and has passed the approbation of both our Universities, in a manner which can only be equalled by the liberality of those celebrated judges of literature, who have pronounced it to be "*the best they have ever seen.*"

Having traced the history and principles of Short-hand, from its first invention, through all the stages of improvement, it only remains that I should indulge in a few concluding observations on the injury to which the science is exposed by the hasty adoption of imperfect systems, and an unsuspicious confidence in the professions of *pretenders*, or *enthusiasts*. Nothing has more completely impeded the progress of the science than the appearance of such individuals as MACAULAY, TAPLIN, LAWSON, DANGERFIELD, and the innovators on BYROM'S system. The public, deluded by extravagant professions, have turned aside from the legitimate masters of the art, and endeavoured to acquire the most *useless* and

unintelligible systems, to the neglect of those *original, genuine,* and *profitable* modes of instruction, which can *alone* facilitate the progress of the art. It is lamentable to consider, that the pamphlet of a NICHOLSON, a HERVEY, or a MITCHELL, *retards* the progress of the science, and *degrades* its reputation, to a greater extent than can be redeemed by the most strenuous exertions of able and experienced professors. The student who adopts *their* systems, finding it unadapted to his views, forsakes it in disgust, bewildered by the obscurity of the rules and explanations, and regards the pursuit as unattainable. The opinion of one individual discourages another: the faults of the *teachers* of Short-hand are attributed to the *art* itself, in the same manner that religion is debased and becomes the object of public ridicule, because its licenced ministers are sometimes remarkable for ignorance and neglect of duty.

Two hundred years have elapsed since the introduction of a rational system of Short-hand, to the notice of the English people.

It may, without injustice, be concluded that, had the number of systems been less by one half, the proficiency and number of the pupils would have been greater. The embarrassment of the student would have been less; the more excellent the system, the more frequently it would have been studied; and instead of a variety of *useless and perplexing innovations,* the science would have been distinguished by *regular and systematic improvements.*

The triumph of Stenography, however, over all the difficulties by which it has been opposed, is decisive and complete. It is now diffused throughout every class of English society, and is generally practiced in the most enlightened kingdoms of the Continent. It forms a principal object of tuition in our eastern seminaries, and has attracted the attention of professional men in the United States of America. Many of the most valuable notes and observations of celebrated travellers, in every region of the globe, have been committed to Short-hand, a circumstance which has enabled them to

describe the objects of art and nature, with convenience, secrecy, and dispatch.

The powers of human genius, and the gradual progress of discovery in every art and science, induce us to believe that, notwithstanding the comparative perfection to which Stenography is brought, an æra is not far distant when its utility and excellence will be still more propitiously enhanced, and a *Universal Language*, adapted to every clime and nation, shall be deduced from the application of its principles. From the time of Locke to the present day, its merits have attracted the notice, and commanded the eulogium of eminent Philosophers, and its acquisition has been diffused, beneath their sanction, throughout a great majority of the seminaries of education. Its practice has become one of the most important sources of professional emolument; and the advantages accruing to a reporter in the Courts, from a knowledge of the art, are too obvious to be explained.

It only remains that I should solicit the indulgence of my readers for all the imper-

fections of a work, novel in its design, and difficult in its execution. Nor should I have attempted a task so arduous, had not my peculiar opportunities of recording the history of the art, emboldened me to communicate, as far as consistent with my humble abilities, all the information which I had collected on the subject. My library of Short-hand books, and manuscript curiosities in the art, are (I believe) unrivalled in this, or any other country. Many of the volumes described in the present publication are *unique,* and have only been collected at a great expence of time and labour.* I shall not regret, however, the occupation of my leisure, my money, or my humble talents, if they contribute, in a single instance, to facilitate the study and improvement of the art.

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* My collection has cost me more than fifteen years labour, and an expence of more than five hundred pounds.

APPENDIX.

In addition to the various authors of Stenography already noticed, there are several other names mentioned (in the treatises of Messrs. Coles, Angell, Lyle, Williamson, Mavor, Bertin, and Prosser) of persons who are supposed to have written on this subject, I have not, however, been able to procure a sight of any of their systems, although I have made the most diligent and minute enquiry after them, for many years past; and as there is no account given us of the dates or titles of their publications, I am inclined to believe that the greater part (or perhaps the whole) of them are fictitious.

COLES, ...	Mr. Milbourn. Willoughby. S. Shelton. Heath. Stileman. Labourer. Walker. Bartlet. Beecher. Button.
ANGELL, ...	Mr. Blosset. Ewen. Higham.
LYLE, ...	Mr. Cross. Webster.
WILLIAMSON, .	Mr. Bryant.
MAVOR, ...	Mr. Harwin. Blandemore. Thicknesse.
BERTIN, ...	Mr. Scott. David. Coulon. Cossin. Lodoick. Dupont. Feutry. Gruter. Vallade.
PROSSER, . . .	Mr. Lloyd. Gard.

AN

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Lewis, James H.

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London 1816

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